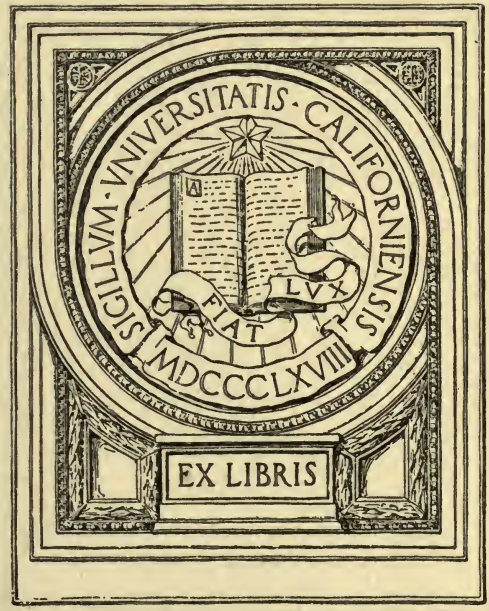
What Germany Thinks

by

Thomas F. A. Smith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What Germany Thinks

SIR HERBERT WARREN *(President of Magdalen College, Oxford)*, to whom the proofs of "What Germany Thinks" were submitted, says in a letter to the Author:—

"I have just read two more instalments of your book, I have found them most interesting and even exciting, very suggestive, forcible and cogent. I think they will have very considerable effect."

WHAT GERMANY THINKS

THE WAR AS GERMANS SEE IT

BY

THOMAS F. A. SMITH, PH.D.

Late English Lecturer in the University of Erlangen;
Author of "The Soul of Germany"

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WHAT GERMANY THINKS

CHAPTER I

THE CAUSES OF THE WAR

IN many quarters of the world, especially in certain sections of the British public, people believed that the German nation was led blindly into the World War by an unscrupulous military clique. Now, however, there is ample evidence to prove that the entire nation was thoroughly well informed of the course which events were taking, and also warned as to the catastrophe to which the national course was certainly leading.

Even to-day, after more than twelve months of devastating warfare, there is no unity of opinion in Germany as to who caused the war. Some writers accuse France, others England, while many lay the guilt at Russia's door. They are only unanimous in charging one or other, or all the powers, of the Triple Entente. We shall see that every power now at war, with the exception of Germany and Italy, has been held responsible for Armageddon, but apparently it has not yet

occurred to Germans that the bearer of guilt for this year's bloodshed—is Germany alone!

It is true that the conflict between Austria and Serbia forms the starting point. Whether or not Serbia was seriously in the wrong is a matter of opinion, but it is generally held that Austria dealt with her neighbour with too much heat and too little discretion. Austria kindled the flames of war, but it was Germany's mission to seize a blazing torch and set Europe alight.

When the text of Austria's ultimatum became known, a very serious mood came over Germany. There was not a man who did not realize that a great European War loomed on the horizon. A well-organized, healthy public opinion could at that period have brought the governments of the Germanic Powers to recognize their responsibility. Had the German Press been unanimous, it might have stopped the avalanche. But there were two currents of opinion, the one approving, the other condemning Austria for having thrown down the gauntlet to Serbia and above all to Russia.

One paper exulted over the statement that every sentence in Austria's ultimatum "was a whip-lash across Serbia's face;" a phrase expressing so aptly the great mass of popular opinion. This expression met with unstinted approval, for it corresponded with German ideals and standards in dealing with an opponent. Yet there was no lack of warnings, and very grave ones too. A glance

at German newspapers will suffice to prove this statement.

On July 24th, 1914, Krupp's organ, the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, contained the following: "The Austro-Hungarian ultimatum is nothing but a pretext for war, but this time a dangerous one. It seems that we are standing on the verge of an Austro-Serbian war. It is possible, very possible, that we shall have to extinguish East-European conflagrations with our arms, either because of our treaties or from the compulsion of events. But it is a scandal if the Imperial Government (Berlin) has not required that such a final offer should be submitted to it for approval before its presentation to Serbia. To-day nothing remains for us but to declare: 'We are not bound by any alliance to support wars let loose by the Hapsburg policy of conquest.'"

The *Post* wrote on the same date: "Is that a note? No! it is an ultimatum of the sharpest kind. Within twenty-four hours Austria demands an answer. A reply? No! but an absolute submission, the utter and complete humiliation of Serbia. On former occasions we have (and with justice) made fun of Austria's lack of energy. Now we have a proof of energy which terrifies us. This 'note' represents about the very uttermost which can be said to any government, and such things are only said when the sender of the 'note' has absolutely determined upon war."

The principal organ of Germany's largest

political party, the Social Democrats, contained a still more emphatic protest on July 25th. A telegram from the Belgrade correspondent of the *Vorwärts* runs : " Since the presentation of Austria's note, public opinion has become exceedingly serious, although the city is still very calm. The general view held is that Austria's ultimatum is unacceptable for a sovereign State. In Belgrade no one doubts that Russia will stand by Serbia. Everyone is certain that in consequence of Austria's excessively sharp tone, Russia will not remain inactive should Austria resort to armed force. The populace is prepared for war."

In view of the subsequent attitude of Germany's Social Democrats, an official proclamation, published in all their seventy-seven daily papers on July 25th, is of supreme importance. At that date they had apparently no doubt whatever as to the guilty party. The change of front in the Reichstag on August 4th would seem in the light of this proclamation, as nothing other than a betrayal of conscience. Further, the split which has arisen in their ranks during the war leads to the supposition that Liebknecht, Kautsky and Bernstein have been troubled by the inward voice.

This is the full text of the proclamation as it appeared in the *Vorwärts :*

" An Appeal ! The Balkan plains are still steaming with the blood of thousands of murdered ; the ruins of desolate towns and devastated villages are still smoking after the Balkan War ; hungry,

workless men, widowed women and orphan children are still wandering through the land, and yet again Austria's Imperialism unchains the War Fury to bring death and destruction over all Europe.

"Even if we condemn the doings of the Greater-Serbian Nationalists, still the wicked war-provocation of the Austro-Hungarian Government calls forth the most stinging protest. The demands made by this government are so brutal, that in the history of the world their like has never been presented to an independent State, and they can only be calculated to provoke war.

"Germany's proletariat, conscious of its mission, raises herewith, in the name of humanity and civilization, the most fervent protest against this criminal action of the war party (*Kriegshetzer*). It (the Social Democratic Party) demands imperatively that the German Government should exercise all its influence on the Austrian Government to preserve peace, and in case this infamous war cannot be prevented then to abstain from any warlike interference. No single drop of blood of a single German soldier may be sacrificed to gratify the lust for power of the Austrian autocracy, the Imperial profit-interests.

"Comrades! we call upon you to give expression to the working-classes' unshakable will for peace in mass meetings. This is a serious moment, more solemn than any in the last few decades. There is danger in delay. A world war threatens us. The ruling classes who enslave, despise and

exploit you in times of peace desire now to misuse you as cannon-fodder. From all sides the cry must ring in the ears of those in authority: We don't want war! Down with war!

"Long live international brotherhood!

"Berlin, July 25th, 1914.

"*The Leaders of the Party.*"

Two days later the *Leipziger Tageblatt* announced that the Public Prosecutor had commenced proceedings against the editors of *Vorwärts* for having distributed the above appeal in pamphlet form in the streets of Berlin. From this fact we may conclude that the charges thrown out by the Social Democratic Party were by no means congenial to the plans of the German Government.

The Liberal *Berliner Tageblatt* (July 24th), gave its unreserved support to Austria's action. "The Austrian Government has voiced its demands in a calm and serious tone which contains nothing offensive to the Serbian monarchy. Everyone who has considered the results of the inquiry into the tragedy of Serajewo, and the burrowing of Serbian propagandists in Austria, must give his absolute sanction to the latter's demands. Much as every right-thinking man must desire that peace should be preserved, still he must admit that Austria could not have acted otherwise."

Even the *Vossische Zeitung*, the organ of army circles, was more conservative in its judgment.

In the issue for July 24th a leading article runs: "It cannot be denied that nearly every point raised by Austria in her note is an encroachment on Serbia's sovereign rights. Austria appears as the policeman, who undertakes to create order in Serbia, because the Serbian Government, according to Austria's claim, is unable to hold in check those 'subversive elements' within its frontiers, which disturb Austria's peace. But only in this manner can Austria protect herself against the criminals who are sent from Serbia to the territories of the Hapsburg monarchy. No consideration whatever can be shown to Serbia, as Austria's first duty is self-defence."

In the German Press two widely-differing opinions found expression with regard to the equity of Austria's demands, but the Press and people were unanimous in believing that if these demands were ruthlessly pressed home they could only lead to a European conflagration.

In view of this latter danger, national opinion was again divided into two camps: the first against war, the second determined to support Austria and pursue the path chosen by the Berlin Government, no matter what the consequences might be. The latter party included the vast bulk of the nation; and Chauvinism dominated in the Press, theatres, concert-halls, churches and music-halls. "Patriotic" demonstrations were held before Austrian consulates, in restaurants and coffee-houses. The Berlin Government was over-

whelmed with telegrams from all kinds of bodies —especially those with a military colouring, such as veterans' clubs, societies of one-year volunteers, university societies, etc.—calling upon it to defend Germany's honour against Slavonic murder and intrigue. In short, all Germany gave itself up to a veritable *Kriegsrausch* (war intoxication) which found expression in the wildest attacks on Russia and a perfervid determination to see the matter through, should Russia venture to intervene in any way to protect Serbia from whatever measures Austria thought proper to take.

It is little to be wondered at that Russia in face of this spontaneous outbreak did take military precautions, for all Germany made it perfectly clear that no kind of intervention on Russia's part in the Austro-Serbian dispute would be tolerated by Germany. It is true that, late in the day, Austria avowed that she had no intention of annexing Serbian territory, a declaration which Germans did not believe, and certainly one which Russia had no reason to accept after Austria's annexion of Bosnia and Herzegowina in 1908.

Furthermore, Austria gave Russia every reason to cherish suspicion as to her intentions. On July 25th Austria issued official orders for the mobilization of eight of her sixteen army corps, in addition to which a part of the *Landsturm* was called up. The corps mobilized were: one each in Upper and Lower Austria, Dalmatia, Buda-Pest, Croatia and Bosnia and two Bohemian corps.

Three-eighths of the forces called up were thus placed very near to the Russian frontier.

Vienna was wild with war-enthusiasm which found expression in demonstrations lasting all through the night, July 25–26th. Austrian officers, who have always been hated by the populace, were cheered, embraced and carried shoulder-high wherever they were met. The effect which this had in Berlin may be seen from the *Berliner Tageblatt* of July 26th: "An enormous mass of people gathered before the Russian Embassy last night between the hours of twelve and one. The crowd howled and hissed, and cries were raised: 'Down with Russia! Long live Austria! Down with Serbia!' Gradually the police cleared the masses away."

Russia ignored the incident, but when about a hundred Frenchmen demonstrated before the Austrian Embassy in Paris at exactly the same time, the Ambassador at once protested at the Quai d'Orsay and the Director of the French Foreign Office immediately apologized.

On the whole the reports of excesses in various parts of Germany against any and all who dared to show any anti-war sympathies proves clearly that the blood-lust aroused by the German Government's policy had already passed beyond the control of the authorities. In Munich one of the most modern coffee-houses (Café Fahrig) was completely gutted because the proprietor endeavoured to keep the demonstrants within

reasonable bounds. Serbs and Russians were attacked and ill-treated. One such incident occurred at mid-day, Sunday, July 26th, in Munich, of which a full description is given in the *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung* for the following day.

A few days later (August 2nd) the Princess Café, Berlin, was demolished because the guests believed that there were Russians in the band. In Hamburg on the following day a newly-opened restaurant was completely destroyed because a young Dane had failed to stand up when the national hymn was being played. "Yesterday a young Dane remained sitting during the singing of the national hymn, for which reason the persons in the hall became greatly excited. 'Russian, stand up!' was shouted to him. In the same moment blows began to rain down upon him, so that, streaming with blood, he was carried out." (*Berliner Zeitung am Mittag*, August 4th.)

These are only a selection of many such incidents which show that the national brutishness was appearing through the veneer. In the light of such events where, on German soil, Germans murderously attacked their fellow-countrymen on such ridiculous pretexts, it requires little imagination to explain the outburst of brutality against Belgians who dared to defend hearth and home.

Meanwhile the smaller party which desired peace had not been entirely idle. On July 28th the Social Democrats held thirty-two mass meetings

in Berlin to protest against war. "The attendance was in every case enormous, but the meetings were all orderly and calm. The police had taken extensive precautionary measures. The speakers were mostly members of the Reichstag or the Berlin Town Council. Throughout they were guilty of the most fiery and tactless attacks on Austria, *to whom alone they ascribed the guilt for the warlike developments*. Each meeting adopted a resolution against war. The chief of police had forbidden all processions or demonstrations to take place after the day before. In spite of this, many of the Socialists who had attended these meetings tried to form processions, especially in Unter den Linden. As large bodies of troops had closed the streets, small parties of the Socialists managed to reach the Linden by means of trams and omnibuses. At about 10 p.m. hisses and cries of 'Down with the war party!' were heard before the Café Kranzler. In a moment the number of Democrats swelled to large proportions and the workmen's Marseillaise was struck up, followed by a short, sharp order. The mounted police advanced with drawn swords against the rioters; the air was filled with shouts and cries of *Pfui!* (Shame!). On the other side of the road the crowd sang the national hymn. The masses clashed together, and the police advanced again and again till the street was cleared. At the corner, however, the Socialists formed up again, and began to demonstrate anew, so that the police were compelled to attack them

without any consideration in order to preserve the peace. They cleared the pavements and galloped up the promenade. Again the cry echoed 'Down with war!' and as answer came 'die Wacht am Rhein.' But it was some considerable time before the struggle ceased to surge to and fro." (*Münchner-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, July 29th.)

Thus the great Socialist-International-Pacifist movement, with four and a quarter million German voters behind it, fizzled out on the pavements of Unter den Linden. Probably there were demonstrations in other parts of Germany, but this much is certain, that the members of Catholic and Protestant *Arbeiterverbände* (Workmen's Societies) held meetings and demonstrated in favour of war. On the other hand the Women's Union of the German Peace Society in Stuttgart sent a telegram to the Kaiser, begging him in the name of "millions of German mothers" to preserve the peace.

The most interesting protest against the war movement is undoubtedly the following: "This, then, is the cultural height to which we have attained. Hundreds of thousands of the healthiest, finest, most valuable forces in the nation are trembling from anxiety that chance, or a nod of Europe's rulers, malevolence, or a fit of Sadism, a Cæsar-madness or a business speculation, an empty word or a vague conception of honour, will drive them to-morrow out of their homes, from wife and child, from all that which they treasure and have built up with so much pain and trouble—into death.

The mad coincidence may arise to-day, may call them to-morrow, or at any minute, and all, all of them will go—obeying damnable necessity, but still obeying. At first they will whine on seeing their bit of earthly happiness snatched away, but soon, however—although their consciences may not be quite clean—they will be possessed by the general frenzy to murder and be murdered." Franz Pfemfert in *die Aktion.*

Although this article appeared on August 1st, it had evidently been written before the proclamation of martial law. It was one of the last political articles which the paper published, for the next number but one contains the announcement that " the *Aktion* will in future only publish articles on art and literature." The reasons are not far to seek.

In justice to the pacifist elements it must be stated that they were up against bayonets. The only pity is that British public opinion, or any section of it, had been led to believe that it could ever have been otherwise. Austria had committed an unpardonable act of provocation, which at first reasonable opinion in Germany openly condemned. Simultaneously the German Government set in motion an avalanche of racial feeling to play off against the just and moderate measures taken by other powers to checkmate Austrian aggression. In addition to the racial hostility. which had been lashed into bitterness during the spring of 1914, came Germany's morbid conception of national

and personal honour. Lastly the fear of a Russian invasion was astutely inoculated into the nation.

It is the author's firm conviction, and the military events in Poland and Galicia have only strengthened this opinion, that from the very beginning Germany could have prevented any Russian invasion of her territory, but she did not desire that end, but rather that the fear of Russia should complete the "Kriegsrausch" of the German nation. After frightening the people the Berlin Government struck its blow in the direction of their political ambitions—to the West, and after the Russians had been allowed to penetrate German territories they were hurled over the Eastern frontiers at the end of August. While the Kaiser was sending peaceful telegrams to Petrograd and Vienna, the Press was full of horrible pictures of Cossack barbarism and the dread terrors of the Russian knout, both of which—the public was led to believe—were about to strike Germany.

In this manner the Kaiser and his advisers created a national psychology which left open only two alternatives: the absolute humiliation of Russia and the consequent hegemony of Germany in Europe—or war.

CHAPTER II

ON THE LEASH

RUSSIA gave the world to understand by an official declaration, issued on Friday, July 24th, 1914, that she was not an indifferent, but a keenly interested spectator to the Austro-Serbian conflict. On the following day Russia's declaration was published in almost the entire German Press, and from that moment the same Press was flooded with all kinds of attacks directed against the Eastern neighbour. Russia was frankly told to mind her own business—the quarrel did not concern her

The German public immediately accepted this point of view, so that every subsequent move on Russia's part appeared in the light of an unwarrantable offensive. Undoubtedly the Bismarckian tactics of publishing inspired articles in all parts of Germany were employed, and their colouring left no doubt on the public mind that the much-talked-of Slavonic danger had assumed an acute form.

A request on Russia's part, made on July 25th, that the space of time (forty-eight hours) allowed to

Serbia for an answer should be extended, only increased popular irritation in the Germanic Empires. This irritation was accompanied by an unmistakable bellicose spirit which called forth its natural counterpart in Petrograd.

Nevertheless the fact remains that up till July 25th Russia had only asked for time, and the reply given by the Berlin mob (?) during the following night, was echoed throughout Germany. The view that Russia had no right to interest herself on behalf of Serbia (passing over Russia's right to preserve the newly-established balance of power in the Balkans) is untenable. If Canada had a quarrel—just or unjust—with the United States, it would be ridiculous to assert that England had no right to intervene.

This was, however, not the first occasion on which Germany had advanced so preposterous a claim. During the tariff conflict between Germany and Canada some years ago, a wave of indignant anger went over the whole Fatherland, because England ventured to interfere.

In any case, during the last week before war broke out, the German Government succeeded in imposing upon public opinion the feeling that the quarrel was a racial one ; together with the conviction that Russia was interfering in order to protect a band of murderers from just punishment, and had neither rights nor interests at stake in the quarrel. This conspiracy succeeded, but the whole German nation must still be held responsible for the outbreak of war, because, as has been shown in the preceding

chapter, the nation had already been warned by newspapers of various political parties. They had been plainly told that Austria had exceeded the limits of all diplomatic dealings between two sovereign States, and that Austria's provocation could easily kindle a world war.

Warnings and truths were alike forgotten, and the voices which uttered them were now raising another hue and cry.* Racial hatred was ablaze; the warlike instincts of a military people were calling for action, and a diseased conception of national honour was asking why Berlin did not act against the Russian barbarians. In one paper the author remembers reading a violent demand for action against Russia before the national ardour had time to cool down.

On July 26th Austrian mobilization was in full swing, and Russia admittedly took precautions of a similar nature soon after that date. We may be sure that Russia understands her neighbours better than the inhabitants of the British Isles understand them. In 1909 she had suffered a severe diplomatic defeat and corresponding loss of prestige, because she could only use words in dealing with Germany and Austria.† Now she was faced with

* The last mention of Austria as the guilty party is the account of the Social Democratic demonstrations in Berlin on July 28th; reported in the papers of the following day.

† "The interests of Russian and German imperialism have continually clashed during the last ten years, and more than once Russia has had to beat a retreat before Germany's threats." Dr. Paul Lensch, member of the Reichstag, in his "German Social Democracy and the World War," p. 35. Published by "Vorwärts Co." Berlin, 1915.

the alternative of withdrawing from her declared attitude (July 24th) or taking measures of a military character. In order not to sacrifice her position as a European power and her special position as the leader of the Slavonic peoples, Russia chose the latter course, the only honourable one open to her.

German papers and public speakers retorted that Russia is the patron and protector of assassins—a calculated distortion of the facts intended to have due effect on public opinion. On all sides it was said that Russia had given Serbia secret assurances of help which caused her to become stiff-backed and unrepentant. Fortunately, it is possible to refute the accusation through the pen of a German journalist, who described Belgrade's desperate position on July 25th, the day when the ultimatum expired.

"At last the inhabitants of Belgrade have become aware of their serious situation. 'We are lost! Russia has left us in the lurch!' is being shouted in the streets. Journalists, who at 2.30 p.m. had assured me that Russia had intervened in Vienna with success, succumbed now to the general depression. The people believe that they have been betrayed and sold; rumours of assassination pass from mouth to mouth. The ministerial council has been characterized by violent recriminations, ending in blows. Others asserted that the Crown Prince Alexander had been stabbed by a leader of the war-party. Another whispers that King Peter is dying from an apoplectic fit or as the result of

an *attentat*. The reports become wilder, and each increases the dread of some unutterable, imminent catastrophe.

"The streets are crowded with terror-stricken citizens. Curses resound on all sides, Certainly a most unusual struggle is going on between the two parties for peace and war. Shortly after three o'clock it seems to be settled that Austria's demands will be fulfilled. It is true the mobilization decree has been posted up on all public buildings, but that means nothing. We still have nearly three hours in which all can be righted. How will this gallows-respite be employed ?

"It is four o'clock. Messengers rush from one Embassy to the other. In the coffee-houses the rumour goes round : 'Italy is our saviour in distress.' Cries of 'shame !' against Russia are raised, while the '*vivas !*' for Italy sound louder and louder. The crowd marches to the Italian Embassy, but are received with long and astonished faces. No ! there is nothing to hope for from Italy. Next they go to the French Embassy ; now there are about two thousand of us. Another disappointment ! A young diplomat receives the thronging masses and talks empty nothings, including a great deal about France's sympathy for Serbia. But in this dark hour sympathy is of no avail. Downcast and silent, the people go next to the representative of Albion —who declines to appear.

"The confusion in the minds of the masses caused by the Government's indecision increases

from minute to minute; indescribable scenes are witnessed before the General Post Office. It is alleged that thousands and thousands of telegrams have arrived from Russia, begging the members of Serbia's royal family not to give way to Austria. It may easily be possible that the Russian telegrams all emanate from one person and have been forged, in order to counteract the disposition to yield on the part of the royal family. Without doubt both the King and Crown Prince have lost all personal influence on the final decision. They are being slowly carried along by the conflagration-party which obtained the upper hand soon after four o'clock."*

This picture gives no support to Germany's accusation that Russia had stiffened Serbia into resisting Austria's unacceptable demands. It rather leads one to consider that an action which drives a weak nation to arrive at a decision on so awful an issue in so short a time, is an action discreditable to a stronger, and impossible on the part of a morally great, power. If Serbia chose wrongly in refusing to bite the dust, then the guilt is still chargeable to Austria for forcing her little neighbour to take a choice in haste. Sir Edward Grey emphasized in his speech of July 27th the shortness of the time which all the Powers had had at their disposal to formulate a plan, by which the conflict could be restricted to the East, or amicably settled.

* *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, July 28th.

The leaders of the Germanic States had purposely willed it so. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made to break up the Triple Entente, the only barrier to the Germanization, *i.e.*, Prussianization, of Europe, and in the tragedy of Serajewo the Central Powers (or, at least, the dominating factor of the two) believed they had found a lever with which to break down the opposition by diplomacy. If that failed an immediate appeal to the sword should follow, The diplomatic forty-eight hours' *coup-de-main* failed, and the programme contained no other item except war. In a few words this means that the dastardly crime of Princip and his fellow conspirators was exploited by Germany, acting through Austria, to disturb the European balance of power under the guise of a just vengeance.

Sir Edward Grey formulated and circulated his conference proposal on the next day, July 26th. Some persons to whom I spoke at the time welcomed the idea; they belonged principally to the lower middle classes. One well-known Pan-Germanist (Dr. Beckmann, professor of history in Erlangen University) said that the proposal was an admission of a diplomatic defeat and a sign that the Entente Powers were afraid to draw the sword. If the three Powers in question were prepared to pocket this smack in the face, then Germany would be satisfied, because such a defeat would mean that the Triple Entente would never be able to work together again.

It is interesting to compare with this opinion those of two leading newspapers:

(1.) "We understand that the German Government is not absolutely hostile to England's endeavours to bring about a mediation between the contending Powers by those not directly interested in the conflict. But the German Government makes its participation in the mediation dependent upon whether Austria-Hungary would accept this procedure, and in which respect Austria wishes the mediation to follow. The German Government cannot support any action which Austria-Hungary does not desire, as that would mean exercising pressure.

"From Sir Edward Grey's declaration in the House of Commons it is clear that he was not thinking of mediation between Austria and Serbia, but between Austria and Russia. This shade of meaning requires attention. We think that any attempt at mediation between Austria and Serbia would have no prospect of success, because in Vienna they do not seem inclined to accept such an action. Diplomatic relations have not been broken off; the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs confers still with the Austrian Ambassador, and it is not easy to see why the other Powers should not further this discussion in a mediative sense.

"But then Sir Edward Grey gave his idea more exact form and proposed a conference between the German, Italian and French ambassadors and

himself. This conference of ambassadors is to seek a basis for an agreement and then submit the result to the cabinets in Vienna and St. Petersburg. In his yesterday's speech he emphasized the point that no hostilities may take place till the conference has concluded its work.

"Here, of course, is the difficulty which mars his plan, for it is questionable whether Austria will consent to a postponement of her military operations. Negotiations concerning Sir Edward Grey's proposal are at present occupying the cabinets, and it is to be hoped that a means will be found to make it acceptable to the Powers most interested in the conflict."*

(2.) "Germany not only cherishes, in a platonic manner, the desire of the Western Powers to prevent the conflict between Austria and Serbia spreading to the great Powers, but the Berlin cabinet has already been active in more than one European capital in favour of a mediation which will secure European peace. In this respect we are pleased (*Man begrüsst es hier*) that, in consequence of Sir Edward Grey's initiative, the mediation idea has assumed an official form and is open for public discussion. There is, however, reason to doubt whether a conference between four great Powers as an organ for the mediation is the most suitable way out of the difficulty. Everyone is quite agreed that the details of the Austro-Serbian conflict, which concerns these two States alone,

* *Berliner Tageblatt*, July 28th.

cannot be brought before the forum of a conference; but as regards the removal in good time of any difficulties which may arise between Austria and Russia, the question must be raised as to whether the Governments of these States are willing to entrust an official mediation to a conference of four other great Powers. For the success of the mediation proposal it would be more practical if the means to this end were made as simple as possible, and that use was made of the current diplomatic discussions, in immediate communication with the capitals of the Empires in question, in order to carry through a mediatory action to the result desired on all sides.

"In the employment of these means Germany would not fail to support the Western Powers as she has already done up to the present."*

I have carefully searched the official publications of the Central Powers (Germany's White Book; Austria's Orange Book), and can find no record in them of any pacific action on Germany's part in either of the European capitals; hence the claims made in the above article seem to be an exaggeration.

It appears incredible that these Powers should have omitted to give proof of such action when making their case public for the sole purpose of proving their innocence before the world. On the other hand, the impression given by these books is that Germany and Austria's attitude was:

* *Kölnische Zeitung*, July 28th.

To Serbia: The conditions must be accepted *ad hoc* to the smallest tittle and comma. Alternative, war.

To Russia: What we have determined upon is unalterable and inevitable, and you must submit to this decision. Alternative, war.

The *Görlitzer Nachrichten* published the following paragraph on July 30th: "Vienna, July 29th. After having made inquiries in official circles, the morning papers make this announcement: Count Berchtold has informed the English Ambassador that the Austro-Hungarian Government is grateful for Grey's mediation proposal, and appreciates the good intentions of the British Government. A peaceful solution of the conflict with Serbia is, however, no longer possible, as the declaration of war had already been signed."

Before leaving this all-important episode, it is instructive to compare three other versions of the reason for refusing a conference. Sir Edward Grey mooted the proposal for a conference to the ambassadors in London on Friday, July 24th. On the afternoon he requested the British Ambassador in Berlin to propose the conference to the German Government.

In spite of this, document No. 12 in the German White Book, a telegram from the German Chancellor to Prince Lichnowsky in London runs: "We know nothing here of a proposal from Sir Edward Grey to hold a conference of four in

London, etc." Another telegram, document No. 15, bearing the same date and likewise from Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky is as follows: "We have immediately commenced the mediatory action in Vienna in the sense desired by Sir Edward Grey. Furthermore, we have informed Count Berchtold of M. Sasonow's desire to communicate with him direct."*

The next document in the German White Book is dated July 28th. It is a telegram from the German Ambassador in Vienna to the German Chancellor in Berlin. "Count Berchtold begs me to express his thanks to you for communicating the English mediation proposal. He replies, however, that in consequence of the commencement of hostilities by Serbia and after the declaration of war which has meanwhile been made he must look upon England's step as being too late."

In the Austrian Orange Book, p. 122, we find this passage in a telegram from Count Berchtold to the Austrian representative in London: "When Sir Edward Grey speaks of the possibility of avoiding an outbreak of hostilities he is too late, for yesterday Serbians shot at our frontier guards, and to-day we have declared war on Serbia."

There are two points in these telegrams which require explanation. Firstly, why should Sir Edward Grey's proposal take so long to reach

* This message leads to the assumption that direct communications between Vienna and Petrograd had already ceased, although the *Kölnische Zeitung* told the German public on the following day that they had not.

Vienna. Apparently it took from Monday to Wednesday to go by telegram from London via Berlin to Vienna. Two German newspapers (already quoted) knew of this conference idea on the 27th of July and commented upon it in their morning editions of the following day.

The other point is the Austrian statement that Serbia commenced hostilities. If this were the case, one would expect that Austria-Hungary, in declaring war subsequently to the alleged shooting by Serbians at frontier guards, would make mention of the acts as a *casus belli*. On p. 117 of the Red Book the text of the declaration of war is given in full, but there is no mention of any resort to arms on the part of Serbia.

We are forced to the conclusion that Germany and Austria are mutually responsible for preventing the conference ; they desired war, and a conference might have preserved peace. During the present summer (1915) an important work has been published in Germany from which the following passage is taken :

" Grey thought the time had now arrived to formulate a mediation proposal. This idea was from the very beginning unacceptable to Austria, because that would indirectly be a recognition of Russia as an interested Power in the Austro-Serbian conflict. Only those who have followed the development of mutual obligations between the Entente Powers are able to understand the rôle which Russia's two comrades (France and

England)—to say nothing at all of Italy—would have played in this conference. During its sittings Russia would have continued her military preparations, while Germany would have been pledged not to mobilize. Finally, nobody could assert that the man (Sir Edward Grey) who would have presided over these negotiations, could have been impartial. The more one thinks about this mediation proposal the more clearly one recognizes that it would have made for a diplomatic victory of the Triple Entente."*

Even the claim that Austria showed some inclination to permit mediation on the points in her ultimatum to Serbia which were incompatible with Serbia's sovereignty, has been categorically denied. The Vienna *Fremdenblatt* for September 24th, 1914, contains this official announcement:

"Vienna, September 24th. In a report of the late British Ambassador published by the British Government, there is a passage which maintains that Austria-Hungary's Ambassador, Count Szapary, in St. Petersburg had informed Monsieur Sasonow, Russia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, that Austria-Hungary 'was willing to submit the points in her Note to Serbia which seemed incompatible with Serbian independence, to mediation.'

"We have been informed officially that this statement is absolutely untrue; according to the

* Professor Hermann Oncken: "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," pp. 545–6.

nature of the step taken by the monarchy in Belgrade, it would have been absolutely unthinkable. The passage cited from the British Ambassador's report, as well as some other phrases in the same, are evidently inspired by a certain bias. They are intended to prove, by asserting that Austria-Hungary was prepared to yield on some points at issue, that German diplomacy was really responsible for the outbreak of war.

"Such attempts cannot obscure the truth, that Austria-Hungary and Germany concurred in the wish to preserve European peace. If this wish has not been fulfilled, and a European conflict has arisen out of a local settlement, it can only be ascribed to the circumstance that Russia first threatened Austria-Hungary and then Germany by an unjustifiable mobilization. By this she forced war upon the Central Powers and thus kindled a general conflagration."

In dealing with Germany's endeavours for peace Professor Oncken writes on p. 546 of "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg" ("Germany and the World War"): "The work of German diplomacy took the form of giving warnings and peaceful explanations." On July 26th she pointed out to the Russian Government that "preparatory military measures on Russia's part would compel Germany to take corresponding steps, viz., the mobilization of the army. Mobilization means war." Oncken does not quote any of the "peaceful explanations" (*friedliche Erklärungen*), and much

as the present writer would like to fill up this gap in his work, he must admit his utter inability, because in the diplomatic correspondence he can only find exasperating threats, thrown out to Russia by the two Germanic Empires.

The whole problem allows of a very simple digest: On July 23rd, Austria-Hungary handed her ultimatum to Serbia, therein stating her demands, and on the following day informed all the European powers of her attitude. The neutral Press of the world and an unusually large section of the German Press, immediately pronounced Austria's position to be indefensible and untenable. The German Government, in spite of these facts, gave its official and unreserved support to Austria's attitude on July 26th. After eight weeks of war (on September 25th), Austria officially declared that she had never swerved from her original claims, nor ever felt any inclination to do so.

It is true that the usages of everyday life do not always hold good in diplomatic dealings, but it is instructive to state the case in the terms of everyday affairs. Mr. A. (Austria) informs Mr. B. (Serbia) that he has a quarrel to settle with him and states his demands. Mr. C. (Russia) who is a relation, patron and friend of B.'s, interferes to see fair play. Whereupon Mr. D. (Germany), a friend and relation of A.'s, informs C. in unmistakable fashion that he must neither speak nor act in the affair or he will be immediately

thrashed. Messrs. A. and D. are unanimous in this view and repeat the threat in mutual form. Meanwhile A. attacks B. Mr. C., seeing that they will not accord him a hearing, takes steps to compel them to hear him, at which point Mr. D. fulfils his threat and falls upon C.

It is not yet clear whether Austria would have permitted Russia to take over the rôle of adviser and second to Serbia in her unequal struggle with Austria. But from the moment Germany appeared on the scene the situation becomes perfectly simple: Russia has absolutely no right either to speak or move in the matter. On this rock of immovable Germanic obstinacy the Russian ship of State, was intended to meet with diplomatic shipwreck. Should Russia attempt to avoid this fate, then the German sword could be trusted to arrange matters in the way desired by Germany.

The German language contains a very expressive phrase, *Stimmungsmacherei*, which means creating or preparing a certain frame of mind. How Germany's public opinion was tuned to the war melody is seen by a study of the German newspapers published between July 25th and August 1st. A great part of the German nation had welcomed Austria's expressed determination to compel Serbia "to lick her shoes," as a London paper put it at the time. Only the Social Democratic Party persisted in asserting that Austria was the provocative and guilty party down to the evening of July 28th.

But three days earlier the process of educating

public opinion against Russia commenced. In fact, it required little tuning to arouse a national chorus, which was swelled subsequently by the Social Democratic voices, demanding that Russia too must bite the dust.

At the psychological moment the terms of the alliance between Germany and Austria were launched in the Press. One paper* wrote: "It is interesting at the present moment to call to mind how the treaty existing between Germany and Austria regulates the question of mutual support." Then the various paragraphs are cited, and the article concludes: "That is to say: (1.) Assuming Austria attacks Serbia, and Russia as a precautionary measure sends troops to the Austrian frontier without commencing hostilities against the latter, then Germany is under no obligation to intervene. (2.) Assuming that Serbia is the attacking party, and Russia gives her support by military measures which threaten Austria, then the German Empire must immediately assist the Hapsburg monarchy with the whole of her military forces.

'Hence it all depends upon who attacks; the interpretation of 'attack,' however, is debatable both in politics and international law. Again and again it has been asserted that that Power which declares war is not the attacker, but the one which makes a continuance of peaceful relations impossible."

* *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, July 27th.

Innumerable notices of Russia's alleged mobilization appeared and, probably with a view to encouraging Germans to stand fast, ghastly pictures of the weakness and unpreparedness of the Russian army, in a word Russian rottenness and corruption. Persistent rumours of revolutions in Russia were current.

A Vienna telegram published in Berlin* informed the German public that: "News received from Warsaw deny the rumours that a revolution has broken out in Russian-Poland, but it is true that yesterday the entire citadel in Warsaw was blown up. Official Russian reports endeavour to prove that the explosion was caused by lightning. The extent of the damage is not yet known, but in any case it amounts to hundreds of thousands of roubles. It is also not certain whether any or how many lives were lost."

A few days later the German official organ *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and the semi-official *Kölnische Zeitung* published the following report of the explosion. "According to the statement of the Governor of Warsaw it was caused by revolutionaries. No proof of this was forthcoming, therefore it was ascribed to lightning, and as nobody believed this explanation—there was not a cloud on the sky at the time—the guilt remained finally with the revolutionaries.

"Now it has been proved, not to the satisfaction of the Russian authorities of course, that Russian

* *Vossische Zeitung*, July 29th.

officers of high rank blew the magazine up, because they would have to supply the troops with ammunition after the mobilization—and the ammunition was not there. The money for the same had found its way into the officers' pockets."

On July 30th the *Vossische Zeitung* announced: "To-day even more alarming news has been in the air than in the last few days. The *Lokal Anzeiger* stated during the afternoon that an order for the mobilization of the army and navy had been signed by the Kaiser. On making inquiries in official quarters, we were informed that the 'news' is false. At three o'clock Wolff's Bureau issued an official *dementi:* 'We have received an official statement to the effect that the news published in an extra edition of the *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger* that the Kaiser had ordered the general mobilization is untrue.' Great excitement was caused by the *Lokal Anzeiger's* announcement, and the public visibly disquieted."

The above report refers, of course, to incidents which happened on the preceding day. The 30th of July was marked by the suppression of three Berlin papers, including the *Berliner Neuester Nachrichten*, for divulging the fact that the 1st, 5th and 17th Army Corps had been mobilized. An account of this *faux pas* appeared on July 31st in the *Kreuz Zeitung* and concluded, after denying the truth of the mobilization, with the following paragraph: "If bodies of troops have been moved to various points of our Eastern frontier, then it

only means the so-called frontier protection (*Grenzschutz*), which has been made necessary by our Eastern neighbour strengthening his customary frontier guards by troops of the line. Frontier protection is not generally intended to prevent a serious attack, but means rather a kind of police action."

Two other passages will suffice to illuminate the mobilization question. "Yesterday Russia gave official notification in Vienna and Berlin of mobilization against Austria. Is it to be wondered at that a feeling of disquietude is spreading throughout all classes of the nation. By delay on our side, valuable military advantages may be lost if the people once suspect that there is an absence of that firmness and joy of responsibility (*Verantwortungsfreudigkeit*) which marked the action of the Austrian Government and was hailed with jubilation by the German nation.

"*Summa summarum:* The German Government has taken honest pains during the last week in showing its peace-loving disposition and in seeking a peaceful solution to the crisis. Nevertheless the political situation on all sides and in every respect, has become worse from day to day through the fault and according to the intention of the Triple Entente."*

"The others are mobilizing. We—issue denials. We deny everything which might mean mobilization or look like preparation for that step. It is

* *Kreuz Zeitung*, July 31st.

done for the sake of 'peace,' so that Russia, who is gathering her national strength together in masses, may not be offended. Are we being led? We look to the Kaiser. The Peace Societies and some of Germany's enemies are looking to him.

"Can we remain indifferent in our hour of dread need, when the gleaming promise of a bright future appears in the distance, if the inability to resolve and dare has made Berlin its headquarters. All efforts are for 'peace' with honour. But in politics one must be able to recognize when it is impossible to continue at peace; when peace is at the cost of our friends, our own security, and the future of European peace. In view of this one must be able to act."*

The internal tactics of the German Government had been successful all along the line. Insignificant Serbia had dropped out of the reckoning. Russia must be humbled. The German nation, believing itself entirely peaceful, and convinced that its leaders had done everything possible for peace, now demanded in no unmistakable voice—action! mobilization! war!

Announcements of mobilization on all sides (Switzerland, Holland, Belgium) doubtless added to the popular belief that Germany desired above all things—peace. Still, in spite of the warlike spirit of the nation and the burning desire to settle off Russia once and for all, there was an undercurrent of overstrained nervousness. A Dresden

* *Deutsche Zeitung*, July 31st.

paper of July 30th relates that between the hours of two and four on the preceding afternoon a Berlin newspaper had been asked thirty-seven different questions on the telephone relating to rumours of assassinations, mobilization, etc.

The process of inspiring national confidence, however, had by no means suffered through neglect. France was represented as being unprepared and, together with England, desiring only peace. As early as July 27th in the *Tägliche Rundschau* the public had been told that Italy, had officially declared herself ready and willing to stand by the Central Powers as an ally.

Even Japan was used to stiffen Teutonic courage. The *Deutscher Kurier* told its readers in a telegram from New York (?) that Americans fully expected Japan to attack Russia in the back and Japanese ministers were holding conferences all day and night. According to the *Weser Zeitung*, August 1st, Japan was arming for war, while the *München-Augsburger Zeitung* published details of an alliance concluded between Austria and Japan in Vienna on the afternoon of July 30th. According to this source Japan had pledged herself to support Austria in case the latter was attacked by Russia, while Austria declared her absolute disinterestedness in the Far East. On August 1st the *Berliner Tageblatt* repeated this legend, but advised its readers to exercise reserve in accepting it.

"During the evening (August 2nd) the news spread in the streets of Berlin that Japan was

mobilizing and had already declared war on Russia. Huge crowds flocked to the Japanese Embassy and spent hours in cheering Japan, Germany, and the Triple Alliance."*

Meanwhile Russia, having failed to get her simple rights recognized and knowing that Germany had made extensive military preparations, decided on July 31st to mobilize her entire forces. The German Ambassador immediately informed his Government of this step, and the Kaiser placed Germany under martial law. On the same day the Emperor proceeded from Potsdam to the Imperial Palace in Berlin.

* *Der Montag*, August 3rd.

CHAPTER III

THE DOGS LET LOOSE

"JUST after three o'clock a company, at war strength, from the 'Alexander' regiment marched under the command of a young lieutenant, down Unter den Linden. Drums were beaten; a huge crowd listened in solemn silence as the lieutenant read the articles placing the German Empire under martial law. The crowd was fully alive to the awful sternness of this historic moment.

"After the proclamation was ended a deep silence ensued, then a loud voice cried: 'The Kaiser! Hurrah!' Three times the shout rang to the heavens. 'The German army! Hurrah!' Once more the caps were swung three times. The boy-like lieutenant, with head erect, sword in hand, commands: 'Attention! Slope arms!' The regular beat of marching men follows as they proceed in the direction of the Imperial Residence. Berlin is under martial law!"*

* *Deutscher Kurier*, July 31st.

"During the afternoon enormous masses of people collected in the streets and open spaces of Berlin. Unter den Linden, in expectation of the Kaiser's return, was overfilled with excited, waiting throngs. Just before a quarter to four a great movement was seen from the direction of the Brandenburger Tor, which spread like a wave along the street. Everybody rushed on to the road, and the police were pushed aside. Then the suppressed excitement of the last few days gave vent to a hurricane of hurrahs as the populace greeted their monarch. The Emperor was wearing the uniform of the *Garde-Kürassiere*; beside him sat the Empress. His countenance was overshadowed by deep gravity as he returned the welcome of his subjects. At a quarter to four the Kaiser was in the royal castle, and immediately the Imperial Standard was fluttering aloft."*

The next twenty-four hours are so full of fateful events that they seem one big blur on the memory. Although everyone was convinced that an appeal to the sword was inevitable, there was still a tense feeling of dread expectation hanging like a cloud over the land. During the whole of that long night the author was an observer from an overcrowded train which left Nuremberg at 9 p.m. and rumbled dismally into Cologne the next morning at ten o'clock. Every station, great and small, was crowded with anxious, expectant crowds; the smaller stations full of spectators and relatives

* *Vossische Zeitung*, July 31st.

bidding farewell to departing soldiers, and the greater ones crowded with fleeing tourists.

On the platforms at Frankfort and Cologne many tons of luggage were stacked in huge piles. It would be interesting to know what became of them.† Few Germans could have slept that night; the anxiety was too great. The whole railway line was guarded by patrols, many of whom were in civilian attire. Here and there a "field-grey" uniform was visible. On many stations armed guards awaited the arrival of reservists and gave them conduct to the barracks.

The Kaiser spoke words of cheer from a window of the royal palace on Friday evening, after which the restless crowd thronged to the official residence of the Chancellor to receive as a watchword the words which Prince Friedrich Karl had spoken on a memorable occasion to his Brandenburger troops: "Let your hearts beat to God, and your blows on the enemy."

An ultimatum was despatched to St. Petersburg and presented at midnight to the Russian Government. The latter was requested to cancel all mobilization orders within twelve hours, or war would ensue. Simultaneously the French Government was asked what its attitude would be in case of a Russo-German war. In these measures it is safe to conclude that the German nation was heart

† The *Königsberger Hartungsche Zeitung* contained a paragraph on August 7th to the effect that 120,000 trunks and portmanteaux had been collected on Berlin stations alone.

and soul behind the Government, otherwise the tremendous outbreak of national enthusiasm throughout the length and breadth of the land would be entirely inexplicable.

Throughout the day the nation awaited, under tense strain, an answer from Russia. "At five o'clock the excitement of the masses in Unter den Linden had increased to a degree almost beyond endurance. The crowd surged from side to side when a court carriage or an officer drove by in a motor-car. Everyone felt that the fateful decision might fall at any minute, when the German nation would know its fate.

"Suddenly motor-cars full of officers appeared from the gates of the royal residence. They shouted to the excited crowd that the general mobilization had been ordered. One officer waved his drawn sword, another his handkerchief, while others stood up and waved their caps. Then an indescribable scene of jubilation followed; the parole 'mobilization' was passed on by the police, and in less time than it takes to write, the hundreds of thousands of human beings surging to and fro between the monument to 'Old Fritz' and the Lustgarten, knew that Germany would now speak with her sword."*

"Our hour of destiny has struck! Germany, the strongest and most peaceful nation on earth, appeals to the sword. The last call which we sent across the Eastern frontier has remained un-

* *Berliner Tageblatt*, August 2nd.

answered. The enemy is mute. Now Germany speaks!

"The Kaiser calls the Empire to arms! Our King will lead Bavaria's armies to him. The nation is ready, armed to the teeth. Challenged by a dishonest opponent who envies us the fruit of our peaceful toil, the hands of German men leave their work and grasp the sword. Our enemy shall learn to his terrible cost, what it means to summon a nation in arms to the battlefield. The German army goes out to fight for our country, in a cause which is more stainless and pure than the light of the sun. The disgraceful Muscovite conspiracy, creeping in the footsteps of Serbian murderers, believes the moment has arrived in which they will be able to fall upon, overthrow and plunder us; Russia desires to kindle a world war.

"We believe that he will not succeed; but should it thus fall out, we Germans will defend not only our land and ourselves; but, in this war which has been forced upon us in the basest manner possible, we shall defend the civilization of the world, the culture of the earth, against debased 'unculture' and the spreading roots of decay. This is a lofty and tremendous task. If we are victorious, as we confidently trust, then the ever-increasing number of civilized peoples honestly toiling in the blessings of peace, will thank us for centuries to come.

"Brothers! Sisters! such an hour has come that the history of the world has never witnessed before.

In the struggle which now begins—a deadly grapple frivolously conjured up by Russia's monarch—the whole earth will groan. The German people, however, will prove that it is worthy to retain and develop its leading place in the intellectual and cultural progress of the world. Our enemy envies us this position because in his land, stupidity and confusion reign supreme; his own uncivilization and barbarism cannot be rooted out.

"We will prevent him from throwing Europe back to the conditions in which he and his likes dwell. May God grant that the civilized peoples of Europe may have true understanding for this historic hour, just as their heroic ancestors understood the danger when they hurled themselves against the invasions of the Mongols.

"First of all the German nation will march against the armies of the East, and, hand in hand with our ally, we hope will so grip the enemy that he will lose all desire ever to attack us again."*

The last lines of this perfervid article, give an instructive clue. A mere quibble had arisen between the Central Powers and Russia. The former immediately adopted an arrogant, even threatening, attitude which thoughtful Germans condemned. Russia's willingness to submit the question to an arbitration conference consisting of four neutral ambassadors seems only to have intensified Teutonic lust to humiliate the opponent. In any case, it is interesting to note that between

* *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, August 2nd.

July 24th and 31st the whole German nation had been converted to the uncompromising attitude of the Government.

Further, it is evident that the German people believed they were about to march against Russia. The very last remark which I heard from German lips as we entered the train to leave Erlangen on July 31st was: "Jetzt werden die Russen abgeklöpft." ("Now the Russians will get a whacking.")*

The Berlin cabinet mobilized Germany's armed strength, as they alleged, against Russia, and the Government succeeded in arousing and enlisting national enthusiasm against the Eastern neighbour. Yet when the time came to strike, Germany's might was hurled against neutral Belgium and unwilling France, while Russia was left free to overrun the Eastern part of Germany. The blood-guilt rests in the first place with the Kaiser and his Government, and in the second place (although in no less a degree) with the German people, because they condoned the crime and acquiesced in the duplicity.

While the war fury seethed through the nation

* We left Erlangen at 3.30 p.m. Martial law had been proclaimed some time previous to that. But the proclamation in Berlin occurred at 3.30 p.m. on the same day. The *Berliner Abendblatt* published on the same evening states that the Kaiser had been waiting and hoping for a peaceful answer from Russia. The Bavarian authorities could not have taken so serious a step without an order from the Highest War Lord, which leads to the conclusion that it was a device to get military preparation well under way.

the cry echoed on all sides : " We want peace ! We have worked for a peaceful solution ! " Yet a study of the workings of the national mind as revealed in the German Press, and of diplomatic doings as shown in the German White Book, affords not a single instance—excepting the Socialists' demonstrations—of any tangible, concrete effort made either by the German people or its representative diplomacy to avoid a catastrophe. On the other hand it must be said that the latter (German diplomacy) deliberately baulked the only practical proposal (Sir Edward Grey's) which could have brought about a solution. The German nation *did* desire peace, but only on the condition that their opponents granted Germany and Austria's arrogant claims down to the smallest tittle.

Exactly at six minutes to one (midday) on August 1st, a telegram left Berlin instructing the German Ambassador in St. Petersburg to declare war on Russia at 5 p.m. if the latter State had not given a satisfactory answer to Germany's ultimatum by that time. Count Pourtalès performed this duty, and therewith the sands of fate ran out.

On the previous day summonses had been issued calling a meeting of the Reichstag for Tuesday, August 4th. The opening ceremony took place at 1 p.m. and all the political parties were present, except the Social Democrats, who, according to their traditions, did not appear, and thus escaped the famous hand-shaking scene. The Kaiser and

two of his sons appeared in field-grey uniform. His theatrical appeal for the leaders of each party to swear fidelity to the national cause by shaking hands with him, as well as his saying that "Now there are only Germans," may have been spontaneous; but it is far more probable that they were meant to be a diplomatic appeal to the sentimental vanity of the German nation.

It would be superfluous to deal with the speech from the throne in this place, but at the close of the ceremony an incident occurred which deserves mention. "After taking leave of the Reichstag's representatives the Kaiser stretched out his hand to the famous professor of jurisprudence in Strasbourg University, Dr. van Calker. The Kaiser looked steadily at Professor van Calker for a moment, then, after the handshake, clenched his fist and struck downwards uttering these words: 'Nun aber wollen wir sie dreschen!'* ('Now we will jolly well thrash them!'); nodded to the professor and walked away."†

The sitting in the Reichstag was a solemn event. On that occasion the Chancellor expressed himself at length in defining Germany's position.

"A tremendous fate has fallen upon Europe. While we have endeavoured to maintain the prestige of the German Empire in the eyes of the world, we have lived for forty-four years in peace and pro-

* This utterance has since become a common theme for composition exercises in German schools.

† *Tägliche Rundschau*, August 5th.

tected European peace. In this work of peace we have become strong and mighty—therefore we are envied. We have suffered with long-enduring patience; while in the East and West, under the excuse that Germany is lusting for war, hatred for us has been nourished and fetters wrought wherewith to bind us. The wind which blows there has now become a storm.

"We desired nothing but to live on in peaceful toil, content with an unspoken oath that was echoed from the Emperor down to the youngest recruit. Our sword shall only leap from its sheath in defence of a just cause. (Loud applause.) The day on which we must draw it, has dawned against our will and contrary to our honest endeavours. Russia has set a burning torch to the house of peace. (Loud cries of 'Quite true.') We stand to-day in a forced war with Russia and France.

"Gentlemen, a number of documents, collected in the haste caused by these overwhelming events, have been laid before you. Permit me to emphasize the facts which characterize our attitude.

"From the moment that the Austrian conflict broke out we have striven and worked to limit the quarrel to Austria-Hungary and Serbia. All the cabinets, in particular England, accept this view; only Russia has declared that in the settlement of this conflict, she must be allowed to express her wishes. Therewith the danger of

European complications raised its threatening countenance.

"As soon as the first certain news of Russian military preparations reached us, we caused it to be made known in St. Petersburg, in a friendly but unmistakable manner, that warlike measures and military preparations would compel us also to take corresponding steps. But mobilization is next to war. Russia assured us in a friendly tone (cries of indignation) that she was making no military preparations against us.

"Meanwhile England tried to mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg and was warmly supported by us. On July 28th the Kaiser telegraphed to the Czar begging him to remember that it was Austria-Hungary's right and duty to stop the Greater-Serbian agitation, as this threatened to undermine Austria's existence. (Cries of indignation.) The Kaiser pointed out to the Czar the gulf between monarchical interests and the outrage at Serajewo; he begged him to give his personal support to the Kaiser's endeavour to smooth out the antithesis between Vienna and St. Petersburg.

"Just before this telegram came into the Czar's hands, the Czar, on his side, begged the Kaiser for his help: the Kaiser should advise Vienna to be more moderate. The Kaiser undertook the task of mediator, but the action ordered by him was hardly in motion, when Russia began to mobilize all her forces against Austria-Hungary. (Excited

shouts of indignation and disgust.) But Austria had only mobilized certain army corps against Serbia, besides which she had only two corps, and these were far from the Russian frontier.

"At this juncture the Kaiser informed the Czar that the mobilization of his armies against Austria would increase the difficulties of mediation, a task which he had undertaken at the Czar's express wish, and perhaps render it impossible. Nevertheless, we continued our mediatory action in Berlin, and indeed in a form which went to the limits permitted by our alliance. (Great excitement.) During this time Russia renewed her assurances that she was taking no military measures against us.

"We come to July 31st. In Vienna a decision was to be arrived at on that day. By our representations we had already brought it about that Vienna, which for a time was not in direct communication with St. Petersburg, had commenced direct discussion again. But before Vienna could come to a final decision, the news came that Russia was mobilizing—*i.e.*, against us too—her whole forces. (Cries of indignation.) The Russian Government, although fully aware from our repeated representations what a mobilization on our frontiers means, did not notify this step to us, and gave us no explanations concerning it.

"As late as the afternoon of July 31st a telegram came from the Czar to the Kaiser in which the former pledged himself that his army should take

up no provocative attitude against us. (Great excitement.) But the hostile mobilization on the Russian frontier was in full swing during the night July 30th–31st. While we were mediating in Berlin the Russian armies appeared on our long and almost entirely open frontier. France was not yet mobilizing, but, as she admits, was already taking precautionary measures.

"And we? Up till then we had not—the Imperial Chancellor spoke with great emotion and repeatedly struck the table while uttering these words—called up a single reservist, out of a loving regard for the peace of Europe. (Loud cries of 'Bravo!') Were we then to wait on in patience till the Powers between which we are wedged should choose their moment to strike? (A hurricane of voices, 'No!') To expose Germany to this danger would be a crime. (Stormy, general and long continued cries of 'Quite true!' and 'Bravo!' in which the Social Democrats joined too.)

"Therefore on July 31st we requested Russia to demobilize as the only measure which could save the European peace. (Loud applause.) The Imperial Ambassador in St. Petersburg further received instructions to inform the Russian Government, that in case our demand was rejected, we should consider ourselves in a state of war with Russia. The Imperial Ambassador has carried out these instructions.

"What answer Russia accorded to our demand

for demobilization we do not know even to-day. Telegraphic announcements on this point have not reached us, although matters of far less importance have been sent over the wires. Hence, long after the expiration of the stated time, the Kaiser saw himself compelled to mobilize our forces at 5 o'clock on August 1st.

"Simultaneously, it was necessary for us to inquire regarding France's attitude. In answer to our definite question whether, in case of a Russo-German war, France would remain neutral, the French Government has replied that they will act as their interests dictate. (Laughter.) This was at least an evasion, if not a negative answer to our question.

"In spite of this, the Kaiser ordered that the French frontier should be respected. This order was strictly obeyed with one single exception. France, who mobilized at the same time as ourselves, declared that she would respect a ten-kilometre zone along her frontiers. (Cries of indignation.) And what happened in reality? Their airmen have thrown bombs, cavalry patrols have violated our territory, and companies have broken into Alsace-Lorraine. (Indignation.) Therewith, France, although war has not yet been declared, has attacked our territories.

"As regards the single exception which I have referred, I have received the following report from the Chief of the General Staff: In respect to French complaints of violations of her frontiers,

only one case is admitted. Against express orders an officer with a patrol from the 14th Army Corps crossed the French frontier on August 2nd. Apparently they were shot down; only one man has returned. But long before this single instance occurred, French airmen had penetrated into Southern Germany and dropped bombs, and French troops had attacked our frontier-protection-troops in the Schlucht Pass. Up till now our soldiers have confined themselves entirely to protecting the frontier.

"So far the report from the Chief of the General Staff.

"We are now in a position of self-defence, and necessity knows no law!* (Cries of 'Quite right!') Our troops have occupied Luxembourg, perhaps they have already entered Belgium. (Loud applause.) That is a breach of international law. The French Government, it is true, had declared in Brussels that they would respect Belgian neutrality so long as their opponent respected it. But we knew that France stood ready to invade it. (Cries of indignation.)

"France could wait, we could not; and a French attack in our flank on the Lower Rhine might have been disastrous for us. Thus we were compelled to ignore the protests of the Luxembourg and Belgian Governments.

"The injustice which we commit thereby, we

* This sentence seems so important that I give the original: "Wir sind jetzt in der Notwehr, und Not kennt kein Gebot!"

shall try to make good again as soon as our military goal is attained. Anyone who fights for the highest, as we do now, may only think of how he may hack his way through. (Hurricanes of applause; long continued hand-clapping in the whole house and on the tribune.)

"Gentlemen, we are standing shoulder to shoulder with Austria-Hungary. Concerning England's attitude, the declaration made by Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons yesterday has made the standpoint which the English Government takes up quite clear.

"We have declared to the English Government that as long as England remains neutral, our fleet shall not attack the North Coast of France. Further, that we shall not disturb the integrity and independence of Belgium. I repeat this declaration before the whole world and I may add that if England will remain neutral, we are prepared—assuming mutual treatment—to undertake no hostile operations against France's commercial marine. (Applause.)

"Gentlemen, so much for events up till now! I repeat the words of the Kaiser: 'We enter the struggle with a clear conscience!' (Great enthusiasm.) We are fighting for the fruits of our labours in peace, for the heritage of a great past, and for our future. The fifty years are not yet ended within which Moltke said we should stand at arms to defend the heritage and the achievements of 1870. The hour of great trial has struck

for our nation. But we look forward to it with absolute confidence. (Tremendous applause.)

"Our army is in the field, our fleet is ready, and behind them the entire German nation (roars of never-ending applause and hand-clapping in the whole house)—the whole German nation! (These words were accompanied by a gesture towards the Social Democrats.—Renewed outburst of applause, in which the Social Democrats also joined.)

"Gentlemen, you know your duty in its entirety. The vote of credit requires no further argument, I beg you to pass it quickly. (Loud applause.)"*

Unfortunately this eloquent exposition of Germany's case contains inaccuracies which can only be described as conscious untruths. I have already made myself responsible for the statement: "Lying has always been the foundation stone of German policy."† Earl Cromer, in commenting on this, gives additional evidence of its veracity.‡

The German Chancellor, when he justified his policy by the dictum: "Necessity knows no law," evidently meant that necessity also recognizes no law of truth. In any case, he remained faithful to the traditions of his country. Although the German Press is both venal and supine, we shall see that it has done the world a service and played its own Government a foul trick. (Der deutschen Regierung einen bösen Streich gespielt.)

* *Berliner Tageblatt*, August 5th.

† "Soul of Germany," p. 192.

‡ *The Spectator*, August 7th, 1915. p. 169

When Bethmann-Hollweg was thumping the table before him, and assuring his immediate hearers and the world in general that the Berlin cabinet had not called up a single reservist before five o'clock on Saturday, August 1st, he was guilty of a deliberate falsehood. On July 31st, I left Erlangen by the 3.31 train for Nuremberg; travelling in the same train was Dr. Haack, professor of the history of art in Erlangen University. He was accompanied by his wife and various colleagues, including Professor Busch, who bade him farewell on the platform. Dr. Haack is an artillery reserve officer, and he was then going to join his regiment. At 8.30 p.m. on the same day, we spoke to Frau Haack on Nuremberg station. The lady's face was very tear-stained and she was about to return to Erlangen alone. She told us in a broken voice that her husband had been called up.

In "The Soul of Germany" I have given names and dates of other cases. I do not propose to disgrace my word of honour by playing it off against the German Chancellor. But acting on the principle of "Set a thief to catch a thief," I shall adduce some instances from German newspapers.

The Paris correspondent of the *Kölnische Zeitung* travelled home via Brussels; his adventures are related at length in the *K. Z.* for August 4th. On August 1st he was in Brussels and complained bitterly, in his article, about the hotel service, and

excuses it by writing: "The German waiters had all left Brussels the day before (July 31st) to join the army."

An article dated Strasbourg, August 3rd, was published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* on the 6th of the same month. The writer describes the martial scenes which he had witnessed during the preceding week, and mentions that the officers in the garrison had received a special order to send their wives and children away from the city several days before martial law was proclaimed. Friday, presumably, the order came for the garrison to march to the French frontier, for on Saturday the regiments were entrained and left Strasbourg. Our good German friend describes the scene in the streets: "Alongside the ranks were the wives and children of the called-up reservists, trying to keep step with the quickly moving troops. Before sunset the regiments, all on a war-footing, had left the city."

Every layman knows that a reservist cannot enter a barracks in civilian attire, and emerge five minutes later in full war-kit ready for the march. The German Imperial Chancellor affirms that not one of them had been called up before five o'clock in the afternoon of that day. It is true that neither the age of miracles nor the age of lies has passed away. Perhaps Herr Bethmann-Hollweg could explain why it was impossible to send trunk-messages on Germany's telephone system during the last three days of July, 1914.

At least, the local papers in Bavaria asserted that that was the case.

The *Elbinger Zeitung*, August 13th, contained a reservist's letter with this illuminating passage: "During the last few days everybody was in readiness; our linen, etc., had been packed and sent off in advance. On Friday, July 31st, the order arrived that I should present myself; mobilization had begun. With feelings of joy I changed into my uniform and rushed to join my company. The streets were full of frightened people with tears in their eyes. We officers pressed each others' hands and with ardent glances exclaimed: 'At last it has come!'"

The Chancellor based his assertion that French troops had crossed the German frontier, on the report from the Chief of the General Staff. This authority admitted that German soldiers on August 2nd (Sunday) had violated the French frontier and continues with these words: "But long before that French airmen had dropped bombs in Southern Germany, and French soldiers had attacked our frontier-guards in the Schlucht Pass."

The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, July 31st, gives Bethmann-Hollweg and the Chief of the General Staff the lie direct. The paragraph is dated July 30th, Kolmar, and runs: "The Schlucht Pass has just been barricaded by German frontier guards. This is to prevent motor-lorries and such-like vehicles from entering French territory without our per-

mission. Several papers have announced the alleged occupation of the Schlucht (gorge) by French troops. The report is an absolute invention. (Die Meldung ist völlig aus der Luft gegriffen.) I have taken the trouble to look round, and may say that the usual tourist traffic is going on as usual."

The remainder of the charge is that "long before August 2nd," French airmen had dropped bombs on South German towns. The towns in question are Frankfort and Nuremberg. The *Kölnische Zeitung* contained this paragraph on August 2nd: "A military report has just come in, stating that French airmen dropped bombs in the neighbourhood of Nuremberg this morning. As war has not yet been declared between France and Germany, this is a breach of international law."

Two remarks are necessary to supplement the above "news." Firstly, in the Reichstag, the Chancellor said this attack had occurred "long before August 2nd." Secondly, the *Cologne Gazette* received the report from the *military authorities*. That betrays the source from which all these lies emanated.

The author has in his possession a Nuremberg paper (*Fränkische Tagepost*) for the whole of August, 1914. It contains absolutely no mention of any air raid on or near Nuremberg. If bombs had been dropped in the vicinity, it is quite unthinkable that the local papers should contain no report of the affair.

President Poincaré, on July 15th, 1915, declared the Nuremberg flight to be a fable. The *Fränkischer Kurier* (a Nuremberg newspaper) on August 1st, 1915, contains an article which states that the news of these alleged airmen, whom nobody saw, was spread throughout the length and breadth of the German Empire. This same paper ridicules the whole affair.

Another extract gives the key to the whole mystery. "Yesterday (Monday, August 3rd), at 8 p.m., the following official announcement was given out for publication.

"Up till now, the German troops, in obedience to orders given, have not crossed the French frontier. In contrast to this *since* yesterday (August 2nd) French troops have attacked our frontier posts without any declaration of war. They have crossed the German frontier at several points, although only a few days ago the French Government assured us that they would keep a zone ten kilometres wide free from their troops. *Since* last night French troops hold German places in occupation. *Since* yesterday bomb-dropping airmen have come into Baden and Bavaria; further, by violating Belgian neutrality, they have fled over Belgian territory into the Rhine province and tried to destroy our railways. Thus France has begun an attack upon us, and thereby created a state of war. The safety of the Empire compels us to take defensive measures. The Kaiser has given the necessary orders. The

German Ambassador in Paris has been instructed to demand his passports."*

Germany had no earthly excuse to begin war on France, and imitating the noble example of Bismarck in forging the notorious Ems telegram which precipitated the 1870 war, the German military authorities forged the "news" of alleged attacks by French airmen and French troops. The German Official Press Bureau completed this vile, criminal work.

Although the point is proved, a few more examples of the "airmen" legend will be of interest. "Berlin, August 2nd. *Last night* a hostile airship was observed flying from Kerprich to Andernach. Hostile aeroplanes were observed flying from Düren to Cologne. A French aeroplane was shot down by Wesel." (From the *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, August 3rd.)

The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, August 4th, contains three separate detailed accounts of French airmen dropping bombs on Frankfort railway station during the previous night. The third account will suffice.

"The military authorities in Frankfort were informed last night that a hostile airman was flying in the direction from Darmstadt to Frankfort. At ten minutes past one the noise of the propellers as well as bursting bombs was heard by those standing on the command-bridge of the Central Station. In the dark night it was impossible to see the flying-machine. As it approached the

* From the *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger* of August 4th.

station, where all lights were out, fifty to sixty soldiers stationed on the command-bridge fired at the aeroplane, which soon moved off in the direction of the Southern Station. There, too, it came under a heavy fire from soldiers and policemen. Nothing whatever has been found on the ground or at the station, not even parts of the bombs. It is assumed that the hand-bombs exploded in the air."*

In peace times no German editor would dare to refuse any contribution sent to him by the military authorities. The above airman-story sufficiently illustrates the state of affairs in war time.

" Chemnitz, August 4th. During the past night, between 3 and 4 a.m., a French airman dropped bombs on Chemnitz. Bombs exploded in the streets without, however, doing any damage. Apparently the shots fired at the aeroplane were unfortunately without result." *Magdeburgische Zeitung*, August 5th.

This is an excellent example of how the Press trick is worked. A lying report is published in a city hundreds of miles away from the scene of the alleged occurrence. The extract where it was alleged that a French airman was shot down at Wesel, on the Dutch frontier, was published in a Munich paper, four hundred miles away.

The last and supreme lie in Bethmann-Hollweg's speech is the most insidious of all. The Chancellor sketched a truly moving picture of Germany

* Yes, they burst in the air, *aus der sie gegriffen worden sind !* Author.

beseeching Austria to find a *modus vivendi* between herself and Russia. Germany claims that up to the last minute of the last fatal week she was working for peace. Bethmann-Hollweg insinuates that on July 31st a last decision was to have fallen in Vienna; he does not tell us what that decision would have been, but he maintains that Russia's military preparations forestalled it and so the decision was never arrived at. Thus Russia destroyed the last hope of peace; the Chancellor falsely led his hearers to believe that it was a certain hope and that the European peace would have been saved.

It is useless to choose one's words in writing of German diplomacy. This is a base lie. Austria arrived at her decision previous to sending her ultimatum to Serbia. This momentous decision was, that Russia had no right to intervene in the quarrel, which means, in other words, that Russia had absolutely no right to speak or use her influence in a crisis affecting the destiny of the Slavonic peoples, neither had Russia any right to move in a crisis which would disturb the balance of power in the Balkans and in Europe. It was merely these rights which Russia throughout the crisis endeavoured to establish; if they had been recognized there would have been no war.

In order to prove what the Austro-German standpoint was, and that from first to last never changed, reference must be made to the Austrian Red Book.* On page 24: Sir Edward Grey was

* Oesterreichisch-ungarisches Rotbuch. Vienna, 1915.

informed by Count Mensdorf on July 24th, "and I (Mensdorf) repeated to him (Grey) many times, that we should stick to that view."

Page 25. Count Czécsen in Paris informed French Minister: "It is a question which can only be settled between Serbia and ourselves," on July 24th.

On the same day the Austrian Ambassador emphasized the same point in an interview with the Russian Foreign Minister—pp. 27–8.

During the evening Monsieur Sasonow had interviews with both the German and Austrian Ambassadors. The latter telegraphed to Vienna: "My German colleague at once pointed out to M. Sasonow that Austria would not accept any interference in her differences with Serbia and that Germany would also not permit it"—p. 29.

That gives the situation in its simplest form, and without making further quotations, it will suffice to cite the dates on which it was re-emphasized:

July 25th	in St. Petersburg,	p. 89
„ 27th	„ „ „	p. 101
„ 28th	„ Berlin by Germany,	p. 116
„ „	„ London by Austria,	p. 123
„ 29th	„ St. Petersburg, „	p. 128
„ 30th	„ Berlin, „	p. 130
„ 30th	„ St. Petersburg, „	p. 131
„ 31st	„ Vienna, „	p. 133
August 1st	„ St. Petersburg, „	p. 136

Moreover, no less a personage than the Kaiser's

brother confirmed this view. In Prince Heinrich's telegram to the King of England, July 30th, the following passage occurs: "If you really and sincerely wish to prevent this terrible misfortune (a European war), may I propose that you should exercise your influence on France and Russia to keep them both neutral (in the Austro-Serbian quarrel). In my opinion this would be of the greatest service. I consider this a certain means and perhaps *the only possibility of preserving European peace.*"

Prince Heinrich expressed no hope that Austria could be persuaded to make any concession, but merely requested King George to exercise his influence to get Russia to accept a position impossible to herself and incompatible with the balance of power in Europe.

The rock of Germanic obstinacy was seated in Vienna, whether Germany was the prime mover in erecting it remains to be proved. Germany knew full well that European peace would be shattered on that rock, yet there is no fragment of evidence to show that she tried to remove it; but there is overwhelming proof that she encouraged Austria to stand by it, thus causing a European conflagration.

And as if the above were insufficient to prove that the German Imperial Chancellor was guilty of conscious falsification, Austria put one more nail in the coffin of European peace on September 24th, 1914, when it issued an official communication to

the Press, reiterating that Austria had never dreamed of departing from the attitude which she first took up.*

Germany's aim was to employ the Serajewo crime as a lever to put Russia, as a vital force, out of the domain of European politics. In spite of denials, there is reason to believe that Austria was inclined to listen to reason, but Germany forestalled and prevented this by despatching an ultimatum to Russia and then declaring war.

A few other points in Bethmann-Hollweg's speech deserve brief notice. He quotes Germany's threats, but not one word from the peaceful overtures which were so often mentioned. He fails to cite any single point which Austria had yielded at Germany's advice. Further, no proof of Germany's vaunted " mediatory action " is discoverable either in the speech or the diplomatic documents published by the Central Powers.

In regard to his justification of the violation of Belgian neutrality, the civilized world has already passed judgment, and in this place it only remains to point out that the four hundred members of the Reichstag cheered the Chancellor's announcement. This alone is a sufficiently severe comment on the conceptions of right and justice which direct the proceedings of Germany's highest legislative body.

It evidently did not occur to the Reichstag or

* " Die Schuld am Weltkriege " (" The Guilt for the World War "), by an Austrian. Vienna, 1915, p. 59.

Germany's Imperial Chancellor that, if necessity knows no law which respects a neutrality guaranteed by Germany, then at a later date necessity would also recognize no law which protected Belgian territory after Germany had conquered it. A lamb in the jaws of a lion is in a truly dangerous position, and although the outlook may be black, it is still wiser for the lamb to try and avoid the lion's jaws.

Bethmann-Hollweg saw the mote of Greater-Serbianism in Serbia's eye, but he was peculiarly anxious not to perceive the beam of Pan-Germanism which has blinded Germany's vision for a generation, and is the one and only cause for the rapid increase in European armaments.

Before consigning the German Chancellor's Pecksniffian oration to well-deserved oblivion, there is one other fact to state, because it is of immediate interest to Great Britain. In the person of Bethmann-Hollweg the German Government stood before the world on August 4th, 1914, and endeavoured to prove that Germany was attacked, and that her conscience was clear. There are even Britons who have got stuck in Bethmann-Hollweg's peace-lime. Yet it would be interesting if the German Government would explain why the civilian population was ordered to leave Heligoland on the afternoon of Friday, July 31st. They were allowed twenty-four hours within which to leave the island, and one who was in the exodus describes the scene in the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten* for

August 12th. Early on Saturday morning the civilians proceeded on to the landing-stage, where several steamers were waiting. "Suddenly the *Königin Luise* started off without taking any passengers on board, and soon disappeared under full steam."

This was the boat which laid mines round the mouth of the Thames. Although the German Chancellor protested his desire for peace with England as late as August 4th, it seems quite evident from the events in Heligoland that war with this country had been decided upon on July 31st.

CHAPTER IV

MOBILIZATION

"MUNICH.—Evening after evening masses of people thronged the streets. The heavy, oppressive atmosphere weighed upon the spirit—a leaden pressure which increased with every hour. Then came the stirring events on the evening of July 31st, when the drums beat 'general march' on the Marienplatz, and a commissioner read the articles of war to a crowd numbered by thousands. Thirty drummers and commissioners in motors rushed through the streets of the city.

"On Saturday evening, August 1st, the general order for mobilization was proclaimed from the offices of the *Münchener Neuesten Nachrichten.* A deep solemnity fell upon the masses of spectators and the crowd fell into rank to march to the Royal Palace, from a window of which King Ludwig spoke words of comfort and inspiration. Still singing the 'Wacht am Rhein,' this river of humanity flowed on to the 'Englischen Garten,' at the corner

of which stands the Austrian Legation. A gentleman addressed the representative of our beloved ally, who sounded in his reply the note of 'faithfulness unto death.'

"And now from out the stifling depression of the leaden weight of the previous days there arose a terrible, united will, a single mighty thought. The whole of a great and powerful people was aroused, fired by one solemn resolve—to act; advance on the enemy, and smash him to the earth!

"Dresden.—I was sitting in the garden of a suburban restaurant; above me were the dark masses of chestnut trees, while before us, above the railway, was a long strip of bright, summer-night sky. There seemed to be something gloomy and uncanny in the air; the lamps blinked maliciously; a spirit of still expectation rested on the people; furtive glances were cast from time to time at the near embankment. Military trains were expected, and we listened nervously to the noises of the night. The first troop-transports; where were they going—against Russia or to the French frontier? It was whispered that the troops would only be transported by night.

"At last a pounding thud came through the stillness of the night, and soon two colossal engines were silhouetted against the sky, like fire-spitting monsters. Their roar seemed more sinister than usual. Heavy forebodings rumbled out in the rocking and rolling of the endless coaches—the clang of a future, pregnant with death and pain.

Suddenly the tables were empty; everyone rushed towards the lighted compartments of the train, and a scene of indescribable jubilation followed as train after train of armed men rushed by into the night.

"Sometimes a troubled father was heard to exclaim: 'If only the first battles were fought and won!' Yet calm confidence prevailed from the very beginning. But the sight of the quiet, machine-like completion of the mobilization strengthened our trust, even though a justifiable indignation and rage filled our hearts at Europe's dastardly attack on the Central States. Hate flamed highest, however, when England declared war against us.

"There are several reasons for this. In the north of Germany, the Englishman is looked upon as the European who stands nearest the German, and with whom we have the most sympathy. His personal reliability and the manly firmness of his bearing, the culture of English social life, English art and style, have given Imperial Germany many points of contact and grounds for sympathy. Our historical interests have never collided. Then we suddenly became aware that this country, under the mask of friendship, had egged on the whole of Europe to attack us. Not because we had injured English feelings or interests, but solely to destroy a competitor and divide his coat of many colours.

"No political necessity compelled modern Carthage to declare war on us, but merely the avowed

aim to do a good piece of business by the war. Without England's intrigues Europe would never have dared to attack us. In our case, therefore, hate has sprung out of disappointed love. England has become our mortal enemy, just as Russia is Austria's. In a word, the two Central Powers are inspired by moral superiority over their enemies, and are determined to wage war on them to the last drop of blood, and if fate permits it, to settle them off and settle up with them once for all.

"At the commencement of the mobilization the railway time-tables in force were cancelled; railway traffic ceased, and only slow local-trains ran, stopping at every station to pick up the men. During the nights a gigantic transport of troops went on to the frontiers. From that moment the sale of alcohol on the stations was prohibited. The publication of news concerning troop movements was suppressed, in order to veil our objective and to keep secret our strength on the various frontiers.

"The trains in the Tyrol were decked with wreaths and flowers. They bore Germans from the most southerly corners of our neutral ally—Italy. Members of the *Wehrkraftverein* (Boy Scouts) inspected the trains at every station, and it is said that a Serb was found bound fast underneath one of the carriages. Serbian scoundrels were found on all sides; if one of them had succeeded in destroying the Brenner line the whole plan of mobilization would have been disturbed.

Therefore sentinels were placed along the whole line and strong guards protected every tunnel. At night all lights were put out and those on the engines covered up; even the stations were not illuminated—everywhere darkness.

"Slowly feeling its way, the train crept over the Brenner—it took twelve hours; in Innsbruck the station was crowded with Germans to welcome the warriors, and the ancient hills echoed again and again the 'Wacht am Rhein.' The solemnity which had marked the first days in Munich had given place to boisterous joy. Thousands of men in mountain costume had flocked into Munich to offer themselves as volunteers, and the streets and station rang with their *jodeln!* (the peculiar cry of Alpine herdsmen).

"Outside the station lay vast quantities of materials for the Flying Corps, and innumerable motor-cars. A regiment of artillery was just leaving, while a band was in the centre of the station; the rhythm of the kettle-drums rolled mightily, and the music clashed in the huge central hall; thousands of voices joined in, then helmets, hats, caps, rifles and swords were waved and the train moved off amid shouts: 'Go for them! Cut them down!' ('Drauf auf die Kerle! Haut sie zusammen!')"*

"If I live to be a hundred I shall never forget these days. They are the greatest in our history.

* Colonel Frobenius: "Durch Not und Tod" ("Through Distress and Death"). Leipzig, 1915, p. 12 *et seq.*

We never dreamed that anything so overwhelming could be experienced on earth. Only three weeks ago and we should have been quite incapable of imagining its like. The feeling that we have experienced something overpowering, something which we cannot utter, overwhelms us all. We see it in each other's faces and feel it in the pressure of a hand. Words are too weak, so each is silent about what he feels. We are conscious of one thing alone : Germany's heart has appeared to us !

" At last we see each other as we are, and that is the indescribable something—the birth of this great time. Never have we been so earnest and never so glad. Every other thought, every other feeling has gone. What we have thought and felt before was all unreality, mere ghosts ; day has dawned and they have fled. The whole land bristles with arms and every German heart is filled with trust. If we were always as we are to-day—one heart and one voice—then the whole world would have to bow before us. But we no longer knew ourselves, we had forgotten our real nature. We were so many and so divided, and each wanted only to be himself. How was it that such madness could have blinded us, and discord weakened us ?

" Now we realize our strength and see what we can achieve, for in spite of all we have retained our integrity ; we have suffered no injury to the soul. Germany's soul had slept awhile and now awakes like a giant refreshed, and we can hardly recollect what it was all like only three weeks ago, when each

lived for himself, when we were at best only parties, not a people. Each knew not the other, because he knew not himself. In unholy egoism everyone had forgotten his highest will. Now each has found his true will again, and that is proved—for we have only one.

"In all German hearts flames the same holy wrath. A sacred wrath which sanctifies and heals. Every wound heals; we are again healthy and whole. Praise be to God for this war which delivered us on the first day from German quarrelsomeness! When the days of peace return we must prove that we deserve to have lived through this holy German war. Then no word must be spoken, no deed done on German soil which would be unworthy of these sublime days.

"Groups stand at the street corners reading the latest news. One counts aloud how many enemies we have: there are already six. A silence ensues, till someone says: 'Many enemies, great honour, and we shall win, for our cause is just!' Such utterances can be heard every day. That is German faith; human might does not decide, but God's justice! That is the supreme blessing of this great time; we put our trust in the spirit. Modern Germans have never breathed before so pure an atmosphere, for Germany's soul has appeared to us.

* * * * * *

"I am going to pronounce a blessing on this war, the blessing which is on all lips, for we

Germans, no matter in what part of the world we are, all bless, bless and bless again this world war. I do not intend to become lyrical. Lyric is so far from me that in all these three months I have not composed a single war poem. No, I shall endeavour to count up quite calmly, unlyrically, what we have seen during these three months: point for point, the whole list of surprises, for they have all been surprises, one after the other.

"Only a few days ago a high State official said to me: 'Let us confess at once that in all Europe nobody believed in this war; everybody had prepared for it, but nobody thought it possible—not even those who wanted war.'

"All thinking men considered that the interwoven economic dependence on each other among the nations, was so strong that none dare commit suicide by commencing a war. Thus we spoke to each other, and that seemed an axiom. Further, it seemed to be true that even if a madman let loose the dogs of war, then it would be all over in a fortnight. The man in the street imagined that it would be a kind of parade (*Aufmarsch*), a mobilization test, and the power which succeeded best would be the victor, for no country in the world was strong enough to stand the enormous cost for longer than three weeks.

"Now three months have gone, and we have stood the strain, and we can bear it for another three, six months, a year, or as many years as it

must be. The calculation was wrong, all the calculations were wrong: the reality of this war surpasses everything which we had imagined, and it has been glorious to experience on so grand a scale that reality always surpasses the conception. Even that is not true which we learned in all the schools and read in all the books—that every war is an awful misfortune. Even this war is horrible; yes, but our salvation. It seems so to us, and so it has appeared to us from the very first day onwards.

"That first day will remain in our memories for ever; never in all our lives had we experienced anything so grand, and we had never believed it possible to experience anything so magnificent. Word for word Bismarck's prophecy (1888) has come true: 'It must be a war to which the whole nation gives its assent; it must be a national war, conducted with an enthusiasm like that of 1870, when we were ruthlessly attacked. Then all Germany from the Memel to Lake Constance will blaze up like a powder-mine and the whole land bristle with bayonets.' The war which Bismarck prophesied was this war, and what he foretold came to pass, and we saw it with our eyes. We saw the German mobilization with eyes which since then have been consecrate.

"All enthusiasm is splendid, even in an individual, be he who he may and for whatever cause you like. In enthusiasm everything good in a man appears, while the common and vulgar

in him sinks away. Any enthusiasm either of groups or societies in which the individual ego loses itself is grand, but the mighty enthusiasm of a powerful people is overwhelming. This was, however, an enthusiasm of a peculiar sort—it was well disciplined, an enthusiasm combined with and controlled by the highest order.

"In this the fundamental secret of German power was revealed: to remain calm in enthusiasm, cold amidst fire and still obedient to duty in a tornado of passion. Then we were all inspired by the thought and feeling: 'Nobody can achieve that, for in order to be able to do it we have had to perform a huge intellectual and spiritual task. It is not alone the result of the last century and a half; no, that work has been going on for nearly a thousand years.

"What is the spirit of our German mysticism, the spirit of Eckhart and Tauler, except: Drunkenness of the soul in a waking condition? The accepted law on which all great German deeds rest, is: to dovetail enthusiasm with discipline and order. From our Gothic, through German *barock* to Frederick the Great and Kant, on to the classical period—what does all that mean if it is not the architecture of one huge feeling? The soul runs riot in its imaginings and therewith the intellect builds. The ravings of the soul provide the materials with which the mind builds.

"What is German music from Bach to Beethoven and from Beethoven to Wagner—yes,

even to Richard Strauss—but enthusiasm with discipline? German music has been our mobilization; it has gone on just as in a *partitur* by Richard Wagner—absolute rapture with perfect precision!

"Hence when we saw the miracle of this mobilization—all Germany's military manhood packed in railway trains, rolling through the land, day by day and night after night, never a minute late and never a question for which the right answer was not ready and waiting—when we saw all this, we were not astonished, because it was no miracle; it was nothing other than a natural result of a thousand years of work and preparation; it was the net profit of the whole of German history.

"At the German mobilization not only our brave soldiers, reserves and militia (*Landwehrmänner und Landstürmler*) entered the field, but the whole of Germany's historic past marched with them. It was this which inspired the unshakable confidence which has endured from the first day of war. In truth, the dear Fatherland has every reason to be calm.

"In the meantime something more has happened: all in a moment we became Germans! We held our breaths when the Kaiser uttered these words. This too arose out of the deepest depths of Germany's yearnings; it sounded like an eagle-cry of our most ancient longings. Germany's soul has long pined to tear itself from its narrow confines (*verwerden*, as

Eckhart, or *sich entselbsten*, as Goethe put it), to lay aside self-will and sacrifice itself, to be absorbed in the whole, and yet still to serve (Wagner). And this eternal German yearning had never reached fulfilment, but self-interest and egoism have always been stronger; every German has been at war with all the others. 'For every man to go his own way,' said Goethe, 'is the peculiar characteristic of the German race. I have never seen them united except in their hate for Napoleon. I am curious to see what they will do when he is banished to the other side of the Rhine.' And Goethe was right: no sooner was the land freed from the oppressor, than each began again to think and act only for himself. Hence, when we first learned of the Kaiser's words we felt almost a joyous fear. If it were only true that now there were only Germans! But on the very next day our eyes saw and our ears heard that at last there were only Germans, and with that, all pain and fear was forgotten. If war is awful, even a just war, a holy war—even for the victor too, we will endure all that, for it is as nothing; no sacrifice is too great for this prize—that we are all only Germans.

"Since the Emperor spoke those words three months have passed, and there have only been Germans in the land. These three months have brought much sorrow to German hearts, for there is hardly a home which does not lament a father, a son, or a brother. Nevertheless, one may say

that since our existence as a nation, Germany has never been more joyous, in the best sense of the word, than in this time of suffering. Through our tears the noblest joy has shone; not alone at the success of our arms; it is not from pride at fighting against a world of enemies; it is not the fact that we are now assured of a future which in July last we could not have imagined; it is not the feeling of power, of which even we ourselves did not know. That shining joy springs from deeper reasons. We are glad because we have found each other; we did not know each other before. Indeed, no one knew himself. Now we know each other, and above all, each knows himself.

"It was Bismarck who uttered these terrible words: 'When the unoccupied German must give up the struggle and strife which has become dear to him, and offer the hand of reconciliation, then he loses all joy in life. Civil war is always the most terrible thing which any land can have. But with us Germans it is still more terrible, because it is fought out by us with more love for the strife than any other war.'

"Does it not sound truly horrible for the greatest benefactor of a nation, which has to thank him for having realized its century-old dream of unity, to say in all calm and as something quite obvious, that his own nation engages in a civil war 'with more love' than any other war? And wherever we look in Bismarck's

speeches, the same complaint is found which had been the eternal lamentation of Goethe—the lament over the lack of faith and will of the Germans.

"How will it be this time? Will it be as after the Seven Years' War, after the War of Liberation, after 1870? Will it be again all in vain? As soon as the Fatherland is secure, will every German once again cease to be a German in order to become some kind of -crat or -ist or -er? This time it will be more difficult, for from this war he will return no more into the same Fatherland. It will have expanded; the German Fatherland will be greater. Arndt's poems must be written over again: no longer merely 'as far as the German tongue is spoken.' Germany will stretch beyond that limit, and in it the German will have work to do.

"In his speech Bismarck spoke of the 'unoccupied'; but in all probability after this war, for years to come, there will be no 'unoccupied' Germans. They will be fully occupied with the new organization. What the sword has won, we shall keep. 'The pike in the European carp-pond,' said Bismarck once, 'prevent us from becoming carp. They compel us to exertions which voluntarily we should hardly be willing to make. They compel us to hold together, which is in direct contradiction to our innermost nature.'

"As we cannot change our nature, it will be good if we take over for good and all a number—a

very considerable number,—of these European pike. That will occupy the German peasant and give an outlet to his superfluous energies. There will be no leisure-energy to discharge itself in party strife. Further, we must build Europe up again. It stood on rotten foundations, and now it has fallen to pieces. We shall erect it again on a German basis, and there will be work enough."*

* Hermann Bahr: "Kriegssegen" ("The Blessings of War"). Published in Munich, 1915, p. 5 *et seq.*

CHAPTER V

WARS AND RUMOURS OF WARS

IT would be more than human if the German nation had actually realized the lyrical picture painted by two well-known writers in the preceding chapter. German newspapers, it is true, prove that the national unity so loudly acclaimed was no empty word; moreover, they show conclusively that grumblers and half-hearted enthusiasts were not lacking. It would probably be more correct to describe them as "sober-minded patriots." These elements had, however, to use a colloquialism, an "exceedingly rough time."

The author has already contended that the German is innately brutal, and in proof thereof quoted the awful statistics of brutal crimes published by the Imperial Statistic Office, Berlin. The present work will contain a picture of the natural unfolding of this "innate brutality" in Germany itself during war time, and on the battlefields of Belgium and France.

There is no doubt whatever that a systematic, officially-organized press campaign was carried on

to madden the people and arouse blood-lust, successively against Russians, Belgians, French and English. One is almost inclined to exclaim: Providence caused some of the fruits of this blood-lashing to be reaped in Germany!

"Yesterday evening in the Riebeckbräu another free fight took place, and quieter guests who refused to take part in the patriotic screaming of the students and other mob elements were badly ill-treated. Beer-glasses, ash-trays, chairs and other missiles were thrown about freely. One man was struck on the back of the head with a beer-glass, causing the blood to flow in streams. Helpless women, too, were beaten and threatened."*

Three days later the same journal contained a public appeal from the Mayor of Leipzig, begging the inhabitants to preserve public order: "If the disturbances in the streets, public houses, etc., should—contrary to our expectations—continue, then we shall be compelled to take severe steps to suppress them."

On the same page there is another report of similar scenes, in one of which a workman was "horribly ill-treated" by eight others. The army authorities were compelled to issue a still more drastic warning on August 6th.

A victim reported his adventures in another Leipzig paper†: "I have just read your article admonishing the 'hot-heads' to keep cool. The

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 1st, 1914.

† *Leipziger Neuesten Nachrichten*, August 9th.

General commanding Leipzig has also warned members of the public not to allow excitement to lead them to 'deeds of brutality and crime.' I am a good German patriot, and yet nearly lost my life at the hands of my own countrymen."

The "good patriot" then relates that during the week he had spent an evening at a concert in a beer-garden. Patriotic music was the order of the day, and as each national song was sung he stood up with the rest of the company. Towards the close of the evening he felt unwell and remained sitting, an indiscretion which he truthfully says "nearly cost him his life." Three skull wounds several inches long, his body beaten black and blue, and ruined clothes, was the punishment for not joining in with the "hurrah-patriots."

Dozens of similar instances might be cited, but for the sake of impartiality it is preferable to allow a German to generalize: "The rage of the populace has found vent not only against foreigners, but also against good German patriots, indeed even against German officers."*

Probably one of the most glaring instances of German indifference to brutality is afforded by the following incident. A commercial traveller named Lüderitz, aged twenty-three, murdered his sweetheart in a Leipzig hotel by strangling her with his necktie. He alleged that he had killed the girl at her wish, and the judge sentenced him to three years, six months' imprisonment—

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 12th.

not even penal servitude! The report concludes* : "As the accused has been called up to serve in the army, he was allowed to go free for the present." Which means that if he survives the war he may be called upon to undergo his sentence.

A South German newspaper† advised "German wives and maidens to avoid wearing striking costumes, dresses and hats. Such restrictions are not only desirable in the serious time through which our dear Fatherland is passing, but such precautions are urgently necessary in the interests of personal safety. For amidst the excitement which has unfortunately taken possession of our people, ladies are not safe, either from insult or assault, in spite of the fact that the police do their best to protect them."

These are the bare facts, in a very limited selection, as regards German brutality towards Germans. In the light of these events the question suggests itself: How did foreigners fare in the midst of this *Kulturvolk?* The answer is simple and expressive: "Not half has ever been told;" yet the German newspapers contain more than sufficient materials to prove that the floodgates of barbarism were opened wide.

When martial law was proclaimed the Berlin Government caused official announcements to be issued throughout the whole country, requesting the public to assist in preventing tunnels, bridges,

* Ibid., August 28th.

† *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, August 5th.

railways, etc., from being destroyed by foreign agents and spies. The whole country at once became a detective office of madmen!

Ample proof is at hand to show that this lashing of the public mind into brutal fury was the calculated work of the German authorities. "We are now absolutely dependent upon reports issued by the authorities; we do not know whether they are correct or whether they are merely intended to inflame public opinion. Thus reports have been officially circulated of Russian patrols crossing our frontiers, and from Nuremberg of French airmen dropping bombs on the railways in that neighbourhood, whereupon diplomatic relations with both countries were broken off."*

The whole Press, with the exception of at least some Social Democratic organs, joined in a chorus of hatred and suspicion against Russians residing in Germany. In bitterness towards the Russian State the Socialist journals were solid in their hostility, but the author has only discovered expressions of abhorrence in their columns concerning the ill-treatment, even murder, of innocent foreigners in Germany. This fact must be recorded to their honour.

"Certain circles of Leipzig's population are at present possessed by patriotic delirium and at the same time by a spy-mania which luxuriates like tropical vegetation. In reality, love of Fatherland is something quite other than those

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 3rd.

feelings which find expression in the present noisy and disgusting scenes. These mob patriots must remember that in their mad attacks on 'Serbs' and 'Russians'—that is to say, everybody who has black hair and a beard, whom they at once conclude must belong to those nations—they are endangering the lives of hundreds of thousands of Germans in France and Russia."*

On the following day the same journal contained another detailed report: "In spite of official appeals to the public to display self-possession in these serious times, the nationalist mob continues to behave in the most scandalous manner, both in the streets and public restaurants, etc. The wildest outbreaks of brutal passions occur, and no one with black hair and dark complexion is secure from outbursts of rage on the part of the fanatics. Shortly before 5 p.m. yesterday a gentleman in the uniform of a German artillery officer was sitting with a lady in the Café Felsche; apparently somebody 'denounced' him for a Russian officer in disguise. The police accompanied by army officers arrested and led him into the street, where they were received by a yelling crowd. The enraged mob forced its way past the guards and beat the 'spy' with sticks, umbrellas, etc., till streams of blood ran down his face, his uniform being torn to shreds. The officers and police guarding him drew their weapons, but were unable to protect him from further brutal treatment; indeed, it was with the

* Ibid., August 4th.

greatest difficulty that they succeeded in bringing him to a place of safety."*

On the last page of the same edition there is an advertisement which helps to explain why the appeals for cool blood were useless.

"APPEAL!"

"Among the foreigners in our country, especially Russians, there are a large number who, it is to be feared, are guilty of espionage and attempts to disturb our mobilization. While the Russians engaged in work on our farms may be allowed to continue their work in peace, it is necessary to watch carefully those who are studying here, or are permanent residents.

"I call upon the inhabitants to take part in the task of observation, and when strong suspicion is aroused to see to it that the suspects are arrested and handed over to the civil authorities.

"The protection of our railway lines and stations, telegraph wires, etc., demands the most careful attention during the next few days.

"VON LAFFERT,
"General in Command.

"Leipzig, August 4th."

An interesting contrast to the above is a police order, issued by the Director of the Stuttgart police.†

* The unfortunate suspect was in truth a German officer.

† *Leipziger Neuesten Nachrichten*, August 9th.

"Policemen! The populace is going absolutely mad. The streets are crowded with old women of both sexes who have nothing else to do but disgrace themselves. Each sees in his neighbour a Russian or French spy, and imagines that it is his duty to thrash both him *and* the policeman who intervenes, till the blood flows; if not that, then at least to cause an enormous crowd to gather in giving the alleged spy over to the police. Clouds become hostile airmen, stars are mistaken for airships and the cross-bars of bicycles are thought to be bombs; bridges have been blown up, telegraph and telephone wires cut in the middle of Stuttgart; spies have been shot and water supplies poisoned! It is impossible to imagine what will happen when serious events really come.

"It has been proved that up till now there has not been the slightest reason for all this alarm; but yet, judging by appearances, we are living in a huge lunatic asylum. Everyone, if he is not a coward or a dangerous idler, should be quietly doing his duty, for the times are already serious enough.

"Policemen! continue to keep your heads cool. Be men as you were formerly, and not women. Do not allow yourselves to be frightened at straws; keep your eyes open and do your duty!

"BILLINGER,

"Director of Police.

"Stuttgart."

It is not surprising that this humorous police commander expressed his indignation in the forceful Swabian manner. Here are a few telegrams which had been sent to Berlin from Stuttgart, or still more probable, manufactured by the official Press Bureau in Berlin.

"A considerable number of Russians and French —including several women—have been arrested in Stuttgart to-day under the suspicion of practising espionage. One of these arrests was made in the top-floor of the Central Post Office, where the apparatus connected with the telegraph office are to be found.

"More arrests are about to be made in the environs. It has been established that numerous attempts have been made during the last few days to blow up the railway bridges. In Freudenstadt a gypsy's wagon was seized which contained a quantity of explosives."*

"Some of our contemporaries (Oh, shade of Pecksniff!—Author) announced yesterday that in Stuttgart eighty, according to other reports, ninety millions in French gold had been seized. In answer to our inquiry at the principal office of the Würtemberg State Railways we were informed that the statements are pure inventions."†

Another Socialist paper which denounced this campaign of lies in its columns deserves quotation. "The spy-mania luxuriates; every Russian

* *Berliner Tageblatt*, August 3rd.

† *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, August 4th.

is in danger of assault by over-heated patriots. The nation, however, ought to know that the Russians in our midst are labourers, students, travellers and business men; it is exceeding rare for one of this class, to sell himself to the scoundrels who follow the dirty practices of espionage.

"Civilization and good-breeding demand that everyone should respect the dictates of international law, and treat the peaceful citizens of a land with which we are at war, with decency.

"Especially those wretches deserve to have their knuckles rapped who circulate such infamous bear-baiting news as the alleged attempt on the Crown Prince's life by Russian students."*

"The General commanding the Leipzig district has issued the following reply in answer to an inquiry by the civil authorities: We know nothing at all of an alleged attempt on the life of the Kaiser or the Crown Prince. The commanding General von Laffert has never uttered the words ascribed to him, that the Kaiser had been murdered. These reports must be contradicted with the greatest energy."†

The following extracts are of the greatest importance, for they prove beyond doubt the source of these lies, and the cold-blooded, calculated manner in which they were circulated by the German authorities:

"The decision as to what may be published in

* *Vorwärts*, August 7th. † *Leipziger Tageblatt*, August 3rd.

newspapers, is now in the hands of the military commander in each district.

"The regulations issued by the military authorities, force certain restrictions upon us and threaten the existence of our journals. As regards our principles and convictions no change has taken place."*

"Berlin, August 10th.—Major Nicolai, director of the Press department of the General Staff, received representatives of the Press to-day and communicated to them, *inter alia*, the following details: Our army commanders decline to enter into competition with the lie-factories abroad. They will convince the world that truth is on our side, and that we spread neither lies nor coloured reports. We hope in a short time to be able to prove how much our enemies have sinned against the truth.

"What have we achieved up till now? The dreaded invasion of Russian cavalry was broken up by our frontier guards alone. Indeed, in many cases only the Landwehr was needed to throw back the invaders. What about the destruction of important buildings, railways, bridges and such like? Nothing at all has happened."†

On another page of the same issue a long official army order to the Press is given in which this paragraph occurs: "All news given out by Wolff's

* The editor of the *Vorwärts* to his readers on August 1st.

† Condensed translation of the report in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 11th.

Telegraph-Bureau may only be quoted literally as they stand and the source named by the initials W. T.-B."

It is thus clear that the news-agency mentioned performs two separate functions, although the German army authorities do not draw this distinction. First, the circulation of reports issued by the Army Headquarters in the field, for the truth of which the Berlin General Staff guarantees. Secondly, the spreading of their own news, and information supplied to them by other German Government departments. All news published by the agency has thus received the stamp of official authority, and the German public is too ignorant to recognize the palpable fraud.

"Metz, August 3rd.—A French doctor, accompanied by two officers in disguise, was caught yesterday while trying to infect the water supply with cholera bacilli. He was at once shot under military law."*

"The report of the Metz water supply being infected, which was given out by Wolff's Bureau yesterday, proves to be a pure invention. The agency informs us that there is no ground for uneasiness, but the state of affairs at present makes it imperative to exercise great care."†

"Coblence, August 2nd.—The Government-president in Düsseldorf reports that twelve motor-cars containing eighty French officers in Prussian

* *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, August 3rd.

† *Berliner Tageblatt*, August 4th.

uniforms tried this morning to cross the Prussian frontier by Walbeck, west of Geldern. The attempt failed."*

Referring to this episode another paper wrote: "The alleged attempt of whole caravans of French officers, masquerading as German lieutenants, to enter the Rhine province as spies is too adventurous to be believed. Especially as it is known that the Dutch frontier is very strictly guarded.

"But Wolff's Bureau, which at present takes every precaution, circulated the news. Hence we have here an instance of France violating Dutch neutrality."†

As far as the author is aware, the German Government has not yet protested to the Dutch authorities for this breach of their neutrality.

The poisoned-water-supplies lie deserves further attention. It was scattered broadcast throughout the land, and millions of credulous Germans reduced to a state of absolute panic and—what was intended by those who spread the lie—blind hate against Germany's opponents. I have before me a number of descriptions of scares in various parts of the Fatherland. A few notices will suffice as illustrations.

"A most terrifying report spread like wild-fire through the town last Monday morning, and reached to the farthest suburbs. The waters of the Mangfall had been poisoned by Russian spies, and everyone's life was in danger. It is hardly possible to conceive

* Ibid., August 3rd. † *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, August 3rd.

the effect of this terrible rumour. Messengers of despair rushed from house to house, knocking at strangers' doors in order to spread the warning. 'That is a devilish deed!' stammered the white lips of women. 'Only barbarians wage war in this manner!' hissed the men, trembling with rage and hate."*

The *Breslauer-Morgenzeitung* for August 10th contains an announcement from the Breslau municipality warning the inhabitants that the waters of the Oder have possibly been poisoned, and appealing for every precaution to be taken before drinking from the town supply, till a fresh supply can be provided.

"The authorities in Danzig have declared the waters of the Weichsel to be under suspicion of having been infected with cholera bacilli. It is presumed that cholera is raging on the upper Weichsel in Russia, and that the Russians have not allowed this to become known. Water from the river must not be used for any purposes connected with human food or drink."†

Finally the originator of these rumours piously contradicts them all and announces, "lieb Vaterland magst ruhig sein," in the following words:

"Wolff's Bureau reports: There is absolutely no

* The full report of this Munich scare occupies more than a column in the *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, August 10th.

† *Leipziger Neuesten Nachrichten*, August 20th. A lying report pu in circulation hundreds of miles away from Danzig.

reason for anxiety on account of the alleged poisoning and infection of rivers, water supplies and springs which have been reported unauthoritatively from all parts of the country, and published in the Press. These rumours, which have caused grave anxiety, on closer investigation have all proved to be utterly unfounded."*

The war had lasted for four weeks, and although no rivers had been poisoned, the same could not be said of the currents of popular opinion.

"While I was walking down a street in Breslau a tram suddenly stopped, loud cries proceeding from within it. The occupants had discovered a Russian, dragged him out and handed him over to a policeman who led the man away. But the official was unable to protect him, and blows with fists and sticks literally rained on the defenceless fellow. The couple, surrounded by a howling crowd, had just moved away, when a nun attracted the attention of the crowd. On account of a report that a Russian spy disguised as a nun had been arrested the same morning, the people imagined the nun to be a man in disguise.

"Smiling at the ridiculous supposition and the maddened howls of the ever-increasing throng, the lady endeavoured to enter a tram. Men placed themselves in front of the car, others dragged the frightened woman out again and with blows and kicks she was driven before them to the next police station. But the saddest part of these excesses—

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 27th.

and I am only describing a few of which I was accidentally a witness—is that members of the so-called educated classes participated in them."*

"On one of the most frequented open places in Breslau a soldier approached a lady and looked searchingly into her face. She understood him, and remarked with a smile: 'I am not a spy!' The man replied: 'But you have short hair. I am sorry, you must come with me.'

"She at once recognized that the wisest plan was to accompany him, and turned to do so. The movement worked like a signal; the bystanders immediately threw themselves in blind rage upon the defenceless woman. In vain the single soldier tried to protect her, and equally in vain was the assistance of two policemen who had come up. Her cries to be taken into a neighbouring house for safety met with no response.

"Her garments were literally torn from her body, a spectacle which finally proved to her persecutors that she actually was a woman, but that fact no longer protects her. Brutal instincts, once let loose, are mad and unrestrained. Blows continue to fall on her head and kicks rain against her body. She only tries to shield her eyes. 'Take her to the police station' was shouted, but that is some distance away. And any second may mean death—a horrible, disgraceful death.

"Having arrived in the guard-room the officials are soon convinced that they have to do with an

* A special correspondent in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, August 7th.

absolutely innocent woman. Outside the throngs yelled in triumph."*

A German officer wrote the following account to the *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag* (August 5th): "May I supplement your article 'Spies and Spy-hunting' with a few facts from my own personal knowledge. On August 3rd no fewer than sixty-four spies (?) were brought into the police station at the Potsdamer Railway Station (Berlin). Not one was kept in arrest, for the simple fact that they were all innocent German citizens.

"Among others who were 'captured' and threatened with death by the raging crowd on the Potsdamer Platz were: A pensioned Prussian major, who was waiting for his son; a surgeon in the Landwehr; a high official from the Courts of Justice; and lastly, a pensioned Bavarian army officer who, on account of his stature, was thought to be a Russian. A drunken shop-assistant egged on the crowd against this last suspect, so that his life was really in danger. He was rescued by four Prussian officers, who pretended to arrest their Bavarian colleague, and were in this way able to lead him into safety."

This twentieth-century reign of terror is not, however, without a ray of humour. The semi-official *Kölnische Zeitung* (August 4th) contained a legend which set all Germany hunting for French motor-cars. "Several motor-cars with ladies in them, taking gold to Russia, are on their way across

* *Breslauer Generalanzeiger*, August 6th.

Germany. They must be stopped and a communication sent to the nearest military or police station."

"The occupants of the motor-cars carrying gold to Russia are said to have transferred the precious metal to cyclists dressed as bricklayers."*

"The official announcement that French and Russian motor-cars had been seen on our country roads has aroused the otherwise leaden, heavy imaginations of the country people to the most incredible delirium. We will limit ourselves to a single instance. One of our cars met a peasant with a hand-waggon near Nerchau. As soon as he perceived the motor he bolted in mad fright into a neighbouring corn-field.

"Our man called in a friendly voice: 'My good fellow, what are you running away for?' Then the hero answered in a trembling voice: 'I thought it was a French motor!'"†

On August 6th every important paper in the German Empire contained the following paragraph issued by the "Army Direction" in Berlin:

"The hunt for alleged hostile motor-cars must stop. It endangers the motor-car communications so necessary to our armies."

This warning was repeated in stronger terms on the following day, and the roll of murdered victims began to leak out. "Unfortunately through this hunt several persons have been wrongfully shot.

* *Das Kleine Journal* (Berlin), August 5th.

† *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 6th.

In Leipzig a doctor and his chauffeur have been shot, while between Berlin and Koepenick a company of armed civilians on the look-out for Russian motor-cars tried to stop a car. The chauffeur was compelled to put the brakes on so suddenly that the motor dashed into a tree, with the result that the occupants—several persons connected with the army—were hurled on to the road and received dangerous injuries.

"In Munich a chauffeur was shot dead by a sentinel because he did not stop soon enough. Even children are not spared in this degrading fear of spies.

"Near Büren (Westphalia) the twelve-year-old daughter of Town Councillor Buddeberg in Bielefeld was returning with her mother from Marburg in a motor. Somebody must have telephoned that the car was suspect, for the Landwehr Society placed armed sentinels at various points on the road. They cried 'Halt!' to the chauffeur; just as the car was stopping, shots were fired, and the girl sank dead in the arms of her mother.

"Even the nationalist journals have expressed their astonishment that a civilian society is permitted to hold the public highways with armed guards. At Coblence a teacher and organist named Ritter was shot by a sentinel."*

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, Supplement I., August 7th. Here we have proof that Germany allowed armed civilians to murder supposed Frenchmen, a fact to be remembered when weighing Germany's accusations against Belgian civilians. The German Government has published a White Book (328 quarto pages) during the summer, 1915, indicting

In its issue for August 11th the same newspaper gave the names of four more victims who had been shot in Westphalia. Among them was a poor woman of weak intellect; she was near a bridge, and failing to comply with a sentry's challenge, was shot. The bullet passed through her leg and killed a little girl who was working near her.

Wolff's Bureau in Berlin reports: "In spite of the most urgent appeals which the Army Direction has issued during the last few days, begging the public not to place hindrances in the way of motor-cars, blundering mistakes are still being made every hour in all parts of Germany, accompanied by the most serious consequences.

"The morning papers again contain reports of gold-motors having been captured. There are neither gold-motors nor foreign motors in Germany. Anyone who interferes with motor traffic is committing a sin against the army."*

Another warning appeared in all the papers of

Belgian civilians with all kinds of atrocities. Waiving the point that if Germany first laid aside international law she had no right to expect Belgium to respect its dictates, it may be safely assumed that the evidence cited by the Germans is of little or no value. The oath which German soldiers are compelled to take precludes the possibility that they would or could give evidence which reflected on the conduct of the German army either in peace or war, even if the evidence is absolutely true. "In the interests of military discipline" the truth must be suppressed. The same oath is, however, proof that the German soldier must be prepared to lay down either his life *or his honour* in defence of the army, and in a later chapter irrefutable evidence from German sources will be adduced to show that the White Book in question contains "sworn lies" emanating from members of the German army.

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 10th.

August 12th in a still more imperative form. Yet a section of the public seemed to find a source of humour in this tragic hunt. A correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* gave an interesting report of his motor-ride (joy-ride ?) from Lindau to Munich.

"We were hardly two kilometres out of Lindau when we were stopped by a barricade of hay-wagons. On each side peasants stood with threatening mien, armed with pitchforks, revolvers and ancient carbines at full-cock. 'Hands up!' First visitation; we show our papers, everything in order. Off again.

"About every two kilometres this scene was repeated: road jammed with huge, long wagons, the same excitement, the same discussion, but now and then somewhat sharper. In some villages the duty to defend the Fatherland has turned into madness.

"'Here, get out! Where was this paper stamped? Yes, it is possible to forge!' They refuse to believe anything; not even a passport from the Chief in Command, nor papers proving me to be a German and my companion a German officer. When I tell them that I am an author and journalist from Berlin, they parry with a 'What the devil is that?'

"These brave peasants defend their Fatherland well. Once we had to wait half an hour till a *gendarme* came and ended the comedy with a few short words. Then we are allowed to get in again,

and as I turn round a peasant shouts a last greeting : ' Really, I took you for a common hussy in disguise ! '

They threaten us from the houses. Now and then the trigger of a gun clicks as it is levelled at us from a window. The roads are lined with peasants armed with all sorts of weapons, iron spikes, dung-forks, clubs, scythes, and old swords from the time of our great-grandfathers.

" Up to the suburbs of Munich they stand at every village by day and by night to see that nothing happens to the Fatherland ! And even if we were stopped twenty-eight times in this short distance ; even if we did have to put up with hard words and black looks—we suffered all this gladly. We rejoiced to see with our own eyes how valiantly our peasants defend the frontiers of their Fatherland."*

In due time the bloodthirsty Pecksniff who had set the avalanche in motion appeared to express his holy indignation.

" Wolff's Bureau has circulated the following warning. Berlin, August 14th. This fatal hunt for motor-cars has claimed yet another victim. Recently an Austrian countess was shot while working for the Red Cross, and now a cavalry captain and his chauffeur have been killed by a forest-keeper on the look-out for Russian *automobile*.

" The General Staff has again and again issued the most urgent demands that this unhappy hunt for foreign motorists—which has already caused the death of several good Germans—should cease.

* Edmund Edel in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, August 9th.

"It is unadulterated madness (*es ist heller Wahnsinn*) to search for enemy motors in our land. Neither enemy officers, nor cars loaded with gold, are driving around in Germany. Would that our people would stop this horrible murder of their own countrymen and lend an ear to the warning voice of our Army Direction. Our Fatherland needs every single man in this serious hour."*

Only one more nail requires to be driven home to prove the blood-guilt of the German authorities for the murder of their own citizens.

"Innumerable reports are in circulation about the capture of spies and the prevention of plots against persons and buildings. In spite of the fact that the military authorities have repeatedly and urgently appealed for the exercise of the greatest discretion in publishing such reports, the nationalist Press exploits every opportunity to disquieten the masses and excite them to senseless delirium.

"It is obvious that we shall not join in this game. We exercise our most careful judgment before publishing anything; in these serious times we must decline to speculate in the thirst for sensation which has been bred in the public. Rather, on the contrary, we must beg our readers always to accept all news, WHICH NOW EMANATE ALMOST ENTIRELY FROM OFFICIAL SOURCES,† with the necessary reserve."‡

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 15th.

† The emphasis is mine. Author.

‡ *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 7th.

The author has ventured to lead his readers on a mad-brained chase after non-existent motor-cars and mythical French gold. He hopes that his readers' patience has not been exhausted, because the ride may prove an instructive education in German methods and the standards of truth accepted in a country where only might is right.

The object in view, in submitting these modern fairy-tales to the British public, is to lay bare the pillars of truth which support the Fatherland. During the first month of the war there was an outbreak of brutality in Germany; contemporaneously with these horrors some million members of the same nation flooded Belgium with dread deeds of an indescribable nature. This is a noteworthy coincidence.

We have seen how Germans treat Germans, which makes it easier to comprehend how Germans treated Belgians. The present chapter gives a picture of how the German Press is worked, how popular opinion is created and blood-lust awakened. When dealing with Germany's defence of her Belgian horrors, we shall find that her entire case rests alone upon the utterances of her oracles of truth: Wolff's Telegraphic Bureau and Germany's venal, lying newspapers.

That was the reason for this mad joy-ride from end to end of the German Empire, and that is the only apology which the author has to make for introducing the latest contributions to Germanic mythology into an otherwise serious work.

Incidentally we have observed that German civilians were permitted to bear arms and did not hesitate to use them "in defence of the Fatherland," as Edmund Edel put it. The civilians were doubtless inspired by the noble desire to grab French gold. Yet when Belgian civilians—as Wolff's Bureau alleges—dared to defend their homes, wives and children against the most treacherous and dastardly invasion in the world's history—then, of course, Germany was perfectly justified in murdering all and sundry, burning towns and hamlets and laying waste a fertile land.

CHAPTER VI

THE DÉBÂCLE OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

IN the second paragraph of the Social Democratic programme published after the Halle Congress in 1890, we read : " The German workmen's socialistic party, although working for the present on national lines, is aware of the international character of the workmen's movement, and is determined to fulfil all duties accruing thereby to the working classes, in order to make the brotherhood of all men a reality."

At that meeting—the first to be held after the repeal of Bismarck's anti-socialist law—the president claimed that they had secured more votes at the Reichstag election than any other party ; they were the strongest political party in Germany.

Since that year they have consistently increased their power, till in the present Reichstag they have no fewer than one hundred and eleven members, giving them almost an absolute majority.

It seems an irony of fate that at Halle in 1890 one of the speakers who dilated on international brotherhood and the inseparable bonds which

bound Belgian and German workmen—was a Belgian delegate! Singer, in reporting on the doings of the representatives in the Reichstag, said: "We consider peace among the nations to be an indispensable preliminary for the improvement of social conditions. We vote against expenditure for military purposes, because we are convinced that this continuous arming, accompanied by the constant improvement of murderous weapons, must be ended. It is contradictory to the civilizing task of the nations for them to be armed to the teeth, lying in wait for the moment when they can devour each other.

"Militarism is an evil for the nations; its burdens cannot be borne for ever, and even to-day the nations are collapsing under them. Modern conditions are unbearable; out of them spring ever-increasing armaments, and at last a time will come when war must break out, because the state of modern armed peace will one day have become impossible."

Another authoritative pronouncement from the report* of the Social Democratic Congress in Erfurt, 1891, deserves mention. It is a passage from a speech delivered by the elder Liebknecht in the Reichstag: "As regards the defence of the Fatherland all parties will be united when it is necessary to meet an outside enemy. In that moment no party will shirk its duty."

* "Protokoll über die Verhandlungen des Parteitags der Soz. Dem. Partei Deutschlands zu Erfurt 1891."

This is an instance of what Germans call *Rück-versicherung*, or a covering insurance. Having pledged themselves never to leave the Fatherland in the lurch—and the pledge was repeated on many occasions—they were free to babble to French, English and Italian Socialists about the blessings of internationalism, general strikes, and eternal peace. But there is no single instance on record to show that German Socialists considered any other benefits of internationalism, except those which served the purposes of their own nationalism.

At Halle, 1890, Liebknecht said: "These ideas are indisputably correct. Nobody,* no matter how enthusiastic he may be for the international cause, will dare to maintain that we have no national duties. National and international are not opposing principles. The word 'national' must be rightly understood. It includes only a certain, limited portion of international humanity. The part belongs to the whole, and international merely means going beyond the boundary-posts of the nation, the narrower limits of the native land; to extend one's horizon to include the whole; to consider humanity as one family and the world as a home."

The error into which British Socialists have fallen—or been led—is their attitude towards

* Liebknecht was wrong. There are dupes who hold that their international obligations come before their national duties, and unfor tunately in the ranks of these traitors, English M.P.'s may be found, who receive £400 per annum from the British State, presumably to aid them in injuring the British cause.

militarism. German Democrats have never denounced the bearing of arms; they have admitted that arms will always be necessary, pre-supposing that the world continues along the same lines of development as heretofore.

They have only objected to the existing *form** of militarism, but otherwise they have always been unanimous that military training should be compulsory and universal. Their British *Genossen* (comrades) have either misunderstood or wilfully perverted these teachings. German Socialists have unswervingly insisted upon every man learning the use of arms, while their British followers have preached absolute disarmament and done their utmost to betray this country into weakening herself below the minimum necessary to guard the land, and to maintain the country's pledges to the world.

In Halle, Herr Bebel made this statement: "I have already made it clear that I consider the efforts of the so-called peace friends towards disarmament to be useless (*aussichtslos*), because it is unthinkable

* Kautsky: "Die Internationalität und der Krieg" (Vorwärts Publishing House, Berlin, 1915), p. 26. "We have fought against the military system not to make the land defenceless, but in order to introduce another system in its place, which will give us the necessary guarantees that the army will always be the tool of the civil authorities and never their master. When the latter is the case we call such a condition 'militarism,' and it is against that alone that we fight." Seeing that military power is absolutely subordinated to the civil authorities in the case of Great Britain (Mutiny Acts), then according to the principles of German Socialists their British colleagues were wrong in all the efforts which they have made against the armed powers of these islands.

that the rival States would agree to legal restrictions concerning disarmament. If such were made, each would endeavour by secret preparations to out-do the other. War and national enmity are necessary products of society, and the existing class distinctions."

The Germans were quite logical in this matter; in effect they said—the existing States and forms of government make militarism necessary, and war inevitable. Therefore we declare war to the knife on every existing government, including Russian Czarism, British constitutionalism, German autocracy and American republicanism. They are one and all rotten, unjust and inhuman. Our programme includes their complete overthrow and the erection in their stead of a *Volksstaat* (People's State).

The position is perfectly simple, and to those who are sufficiently ignorant and naïve this programme promises an universal salvation, as delirious in its joy as that expected by African races when bending the knee before images of wood and stone. German Socialists are pledged just as irrevocably to the doctrines of brute force as are the Junker and military powers in the German Fatherland. What is their industrial and class warfare but an attempt to enforce the doctrine of might is right?

In the official programme drawn up at Erfurt, 1891, there is a paragraph stating a claim for *uneingeschränktes Koalitionsrecht* (absolute and unlimited right of coalition), which means that the

masses may unite to enforce what they will, and annihilate whom they please. The same rights of coalition are denied to anyone else, and in the coal-strikes in South Wales* we have a lurid example—such instances could not be found in Germany—of the absolute and unlimited right of coalition at the risk of undoing any and every other right.

The point is this: German Socialists have declared their intention to give no allegiance to any existing form of government and to overthrow them at the earliest possible moment. Do British Socialists accept this part of the programme?

Throughout German Social Democratic literature we find Mr. Ramsay Macdonald referred to as *Genosse* Ramsay Macdonald, which means that he is considered a full member of the brotherhood. If that is really the case, and if he accepts their programme as one to be followed here he would be favouring the substitution of the *Volksstaat* for the British constitutional monarchy.

In face of this it may be asked why do British members of the Socialist party take an oath on entering the House of Commons, and why do they accept £400 per annum to support a national State, if they have pledged themselves internationally to overthrow it?

The author admits his inability to solve the riddle, but during the years 1902–1914 he has heard members of all non-Socialist German parties assert that the German Socialists do not recognize

* The strikes during the present war.—Author.

any religious oath, and sections of the Socialists admit this position. As a party they are professedly atheistic; therefore when the might of the German State compels them to take an oath—they take it with an inward *Rückversicherung*.

In a word, false-swearing is permitted, when one is obliged by circumstances, to take an oath to authorities whose right and might the oath-taker does not admit. So long ago as 1892 the Social Democrats were publicly charged with condoning perjury in order to rescue fellow members from the results of breaches of the law. Judge Schmidt in a court at Breslau said in that year: "Social Democrats have never concealed the fact that they are hostile to any religious form of oath. For them the religious importance and responsibility of an oath has no meaning whatever." Numerous German judges and authors have expressed themselves in a similar strain.

Readers who are interested in the point are referred to the report* of the Socialist Congress held in Berlin, October, 1892. The party leaders endeavoured to gloss the matter over with righteous indignation and ambiguous phrases, but it nevertheless remains a fact that the desire to counteract effectively, a tendency to perjury among Socialists led the German Government a few years later to make perjury punishable by penal servitude up to ten years.

* All these reports may be seen in the British Museum Reading Room. Press mark is: 08072d.

Before leaving the *Volksstaat* the author only wishes to state that it lays the axe on every conception of morality, religion and social order which we esteem. In the place of existing conditions, it would erect a mob tyranny more degrading to the individual than Czarism or Republicanism. The mines of Siberia and the tinned-meat factories of Chicago may enslave the body, but the *Volksstaat*, as portrayed by Socialist writers and speakers, promises an intellectual tyranny—hopeless alike to body and soul; and those who have had an opportunity to observe the brutal tyranny called "party discipline" which rules the German Social Democrats, will bear the present writer out in saying that its like, could only be found inside the German army.

The strongest, best organized and most thoroughly disciplined political party in the world has repeatedly expressed its unalterable determination to place national before international interests, whenever these two should seem to be at variance. In the light of these declarations, the action of German Socialists in giving unreserved support to the German Government in this war, is not altogether surprising.

Furthermore, this foundation-stone in their policy ought never to have been left out of consideration when pondering over their ecstatic utterances on peace and internationalism.

The communistic manifesto of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, first published in London in the

German language in 1847, contains the following: "Men say that we Communists wish to destroy the nationality of the native land. Workmen have no Fatherland. It is impossible to take away what they do not possess. The Communists scorn to conceal their views and intentions. We declare openly, that their aims can only be attained by the violent overthrow of all existing social orders. Let the ruling classes tremble before a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing but their chains to lose, while they have a world to gain."*

German Socialists have incorporated these principles *in theory* in their programme, but *in practice* they do not hold them, especially if their own skins are endangered, together with the Government which is threatened by "violent overthrow." That is the sum total of their extensive defence—literature published *since* the outbreak of the present war. In its naked reality that is what the guarantee-insurance policy covered. So long as no danger threatened their own lives, goods and chattels, such eloquence as the following extracts were shouted into the world; but when they personally stood face to face with the Moloch upon which for years they had heaped contemptuous abuse, then national (*i.e.*, personal) interests came first.

* "Envy and greed are the two powerful levers by which the Social Democrats are endeavouring to lift the world off its hinges. They live by the destruction of every ideal." Treitschke in the "Preussische Jahrbücher," vol. 34.

Herr Fischer, in his capacity as president of the Socialist Congress in Berlin, 1892, said:

"The reception of French delegates at Halle, and of Liebknecht at Marseilles, have proved incontrovertibly that the struggling French proletarians are of one mind and heart with German Social Democracy. Let the chauvinists, burning with hate on this and that side the Rhine, urge us on to war; let the diplomats and Governments of both countries sacrifice the well-being of the two nations to militarism and the war-bogey. The working-men in the two countries stretch out their hands to each other over the frontiers as pioneers of true culture and morality. They are convinced that there is only one enemy which separates them, and that it is their common task to fight against and annihilate this one enemy—capitalism."

"Now as ever, we Social Democrats reply to the Government's military and economic policy this parole: Not a man and not a farthing will be voted for this system!"*

These quotations have been intentionally taken from speeches, etc., published in the early nineties of the last century. If necessary, it would be an easy matter to fill several volumes of similar matter from the annual congress reports down to 1913; from the vast mass of German Social Democratic literature published between 1890 and 1914; and

* Social Democrat, members of the Reichstag in their report to the annual congress held in Cologne, 1893.

from the hundred party newspapers and reviews circulated in the Fatherland. Yet in the face of all these assurances it seemed to us that the German Socialists had shamefully betrayed their principles on August 4th, 1914, by giving their unreserved support to "Germany's Holy War."*

Probably the betrayal was not so shameful as it seemed, because the fact was not made known in this country that the German Socialists had but imitated Bismarck's policy with Russia and Austria. (Bismarck concluded a treaty with the one Power, then behind that Power's back he concluded a *Rückversicherungsvertrag* with the other, *i.e.*, a covering insurance policy intended to protect him against all risks.)

During a quarter of a century, German Social Democrats have been the most ardent and insistent pioneers of internationalism and anti-militarism. But it has not been so generally known that they too have protected their rear by a *Rückversicherung:* (1.) They have consistently taught that every man must learn to bear arms, and that both man and woman must be prepared to make any sacrifice for their Fatherland. (2.) They have always held that national interests must be considered before international palaver.

In Chapter I. we have seen that up till July 28th, 1914, the German Social Democratic Party

* In all Germany, and among all classes, this has become the popular designation of the European war: "*Unser* heiliger Krieg."

considered Austria and Germany to be entirely responsible for the European crisis. They had then no shadow of doubt, that Austria alone was guilty for bringing the danger of a European war to their very doors; from that point we again take up the story.*

Three days later they tacitly agreed that Russia was the guilty party and acquiesced in the mobilization of the German army. On August 1st this proclamation occupied the front page of their seventy-seven daily papers:

"PARTEIGENOSSEN! Military law has been proclaimed. Any hour may bring with it the outbreak of the world war. Thereby the severest trials will be imposed upon, not only our nation, but upon the whole of our continent.

"Up till the last minute the internationalists have done their duty, and on the other side of our frontiers every nerve is being strained to preserve peace and to make war impossible.

"If our earnest protests, our repeated endeavours have been without success, it is because the conditions under which we live have once again proved stronger than our will, and the will of

* In all the mass of literature published by German Socialists during the war I have found only one mention of their first attitude to the war danger. On the first anniversary of the ultimatum to Serbia (July 23rd, 1915) the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* contains these lines in a leading article: "To-day we may not repeat that which we wrote about the ultimatum in our issue of July 24th, 1914. But there was no doubt in any section of the Press, that Europe stood on the brink of war from the moment that ultimatum was despatched."

our workmen brothers. Hence, whatever comes, we must now face it with firmness.

"The horrible self-laceration of the European peoples, is the cruel confirmation of our warnings to the ruling classes for more than a generation; we have spoken admonishingly and in vain.

"*Parteigenossen* (comrades), we shall not live through coming events in fatalistic indifference; we shall remain true to our cause; we shall hold firmly together, permeated by the sublime greatness of our cultural mission.

"The women, on whom the burden of events presses two and threefold, have above all, in these serious times, the task of working in the spirit of Socialism for the high ideals of humanity, so that a repetition of this dreadful catastrophe may be averted, and this war may be the last.

"The stern regulations of martial law strike the workmen's movement with terrible force. Imprudent actions, useless and falsely-conceived sacrifices, damage in this moment not only the individual, but also our cause.

"Comrades, we appeal to you to persevere in the unshakable confidence that the future belongs, in spite of all, to nation-binding Socialism, to justice and humanity.

"DER PARTEIVORSTAND.
(The leaders of the party.)
"Berlin, July 31st, 1914."

With these words, millions of German Socialists,

represented by four and a quarter million voters and a hundred and eleven members of the Reichstag, tacitly denied their previous protestations, that Austrian Imperialism was letting loose the war-fury on Europe. There are rumours of a secret consultation with the German Chancellor, but that is of little import in this place. The leaders of this huge party proclaimed on July 25th that Austria was the blood-guilty power and maintained this attitude in spite of bloodshed till 11 p.m. on July 28th. By what lightning-change Austria's original guilt was transferred to Russia by July 31st is not recorded.

With regard to the text of the above proclamation, there are variations to be noted. In the *Vorwärts* it runs "within and without our frontiers" in the second paragraph; the text as I have given it is taken from the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*. In the fifth paragraph the Nuremberg *Fränkische Tagespost* gives "capitalistic" for "fatalistic."

A few extracts from Socialist newspapers will suffice to illustrate the complete change of front which happened in three days:

"We Social Democrats in this solemn hour are at one with the whole German nation, without distinction of party or creed, in accepting the fight forced upon us by Russian barbarism, and we are ready to fight till the last drop of blood for Germany's national independence, fame and greatness." *Der Volksfreund* (Karlsruhe), August 1st.

"We desired peace and we have done every-

thing humanly possible to secure that end. But when war is forced upon us by Russian Czarism, then, whatever the final decision may be, we must drop all class distinctions and differences of every kind, to form a single, determined people, prepared to defend Germany's independence and greatness against the enemy—even to the last drop of blood." *Volksstimme* (Mannheim), July 31st.

"A defeat would mean collapse, annihilation and horrors most dreadful for all of us.* Our imaginations revolt at such a possibility. Our representatives in the Reichstag have unanimously declared on innumerable occasions that the Social Democrats could not leave their Fatherland in the lurch when the hour of destiny strikes; the workmen will now redeem the promise given by their representatives. The 'Fatherlandless fellows'† will do their duty, and in doing it, will allow themselves to be surpassed in no wise by the patriots." *Münchener Post*, August 1st.

"Whatever our opponents have done to us, at this moment we all feel the duty to fight against Russian knout-rule. Our women and children shall not be sacrificed to Russian bestiality, nor the German people become a booty for the Cossacks." *Die Volksstimme* (Chemnitz), August 2nd.

It is possible that even at the end of the war

* These sentiments did not occur to this journalist when Germany began a ruthless war of invasion on Belgium.—Author.

† A phrase of contempt employed by the Kaiser when speaking of the Social Democrats in 1889, and which became proverbial.

no explanation will be forthcoming for this astounding change of attitude. Some have suggested that the Russian or Slavonic danger caused it. Yet just these journals, and this party, had maintained, so long as any degree of free speech was permitted, that Austria had provoked the danger, and they were fully aware that the German Government had from first to last approved of and openly assisted in provoking, nay challenging, Russia on a question which involved the latter's prestige and diplomatic existence.

Bethmann-Hollweg gave the alleged Russian mobilization as the immediate cause of the war, but doubtless the Social Democrats knew full well that for several days before Russia's mobilization was announced, Germany had been secretly mobilizing her army. From July 26th till July 30th German papers contained many reports that Russia was mobilizing; they may have been true or not, but the diplomatic correspondence published by Austria and discussed on page 63 shows conclusively that the Central Powers were baiting Russia into taking that step, and when the greatest Slavonic power had made the desired move, Germany replied with an ultimatum which brought about the war, so ardently desired by the great majority of Germany's warlike tribes.

Britishers who sympathize with German Social Democracy may advance the plea: If Germany's military preparations were secret, how could the Social Democrats know of these proceedings?

The answer is direct and simple : Every individual Social Democrat—and men, women, and children, they number some twenty millions—has for years past been a spy and informer in the interests of the *Umsturzpartei* (overthrow-party). All the happenings of the workshop, barracks, farmyard, shop and office have been systematically reported to the local Press, and local committees of the Democratic Party ; the ammunitions thus obtained have been just as systematically employed to fire insidious paragraphs and Press articles at governments, local authorities, employers, officers, and even the employers of servant-girls. Of late years it has been dangerous to have a difference even with a maid-servant ; a few days later the inevitable insidious, anonymous attack would certainly appear in one or other of the S. D. journals.

One instance will suffice to illustrate the every-day routine of the class-war (*Klassenkampf*) in which the whole energies of the Social Democrats have been absorbed for a quarter of a century. An acquaintance of the author's, Major Schub, in the 19th Infantry Regiment, stationed in Erlangen, dared some years ago to send his orderly with a she-goat to a peasant in the district who kept the indispensable he-goat. Two days later he was pilloried in a Fürth paper for calling upon a private soldier to fulfil such a degrading office. German workmen do not read the *Vorwärts* (its circulation is well under 100,000), but they read one or other of the seventy purveyors of filth and class hatred

which form the stock-in-trade of the Social Democratic Party.

The author of this work, knew as early as July 25th, that reserve officers had been warned to hold themselves in readiness; on succeeding days he saw tangible evidence that mobilization was proceeding stealthily, and it would be ridiculous for him to claim greater knowledge than the hundred and eleven S. D. members of the Reichstag, and the seventy-seven editors of their party papers—especially when these have an army of millions of spies at their command.

In order to obtain a correct judgment of the motives which actuated German Social Democrats in their complete support of the German Government it is necessary to consult the works published by them during the war. Karl Kautsky writes:* "That which under these circumstances, was most immediate and pressing in determining the attitude to war, not only for the masses, but also many of our leaders, was the fear of a hostile invasion, the urgent necessity to keep the enemy out of our territory, no matter what the causes, object or results of the war may be. This fear was never greater and more justified than on this occasion; never have the devastating results of invasion been more terrible. Belgium and East Prussia speak plainly.

"The increased size of the armies greatly extends the unavoidable desolation of war, and in addition

* "Die Internationalität und der Krieg." Berlin, 1915; p. 32.

to this a second strongly-working popular motive decides the attitude of a nation to war, viz., the interest of the entire people in the fate of an army in which every family is represented."

It thus becomes evident that no motives of justice, right or wrong, or politics played any part in the decision arrived at, but merely a great fear which impelled the Social Democrats to consider first and foremost how to save their own skins.

All protest meetings were cancelled on August 1st, and the Press restricted itself to chronicling rumours and events. The sitting of the Reichstag was awaited with impatience as that was expected to bring more light on the crisis. The effect which Bethmann-Hollweg produced upon his hearers was to convince them that Russia alone was to blame. "The question of supporting the war by voting a loan was all the easier for us to decide, because the provocation had come, not from France or England, but from Russia. I admit openly that while I was travelling to Berlin to the Reichstag I had very little time to hunt for precedents in the party's history to determine my vote. For me the force of circumstances alone was decisive; the material interests of the working classes and the entire nation; common sense and the realization of a practical policy."*

"At the time of voting on August 4th, we

* "Die Kriegssitzung des deutschen Reichstags" ("The War Sitting of the Reichstag"), by Karl Hildenbrand, Member for Stuttgart. Published 1915; p. 13.

were not in a position to take England into consideration, because at the moment she had not yet declared war. But by England's intervention our attitude on August 4th has been still more emphatically justified."*

This statement is a gross distortion of the truth. It is true that England had not yet declared war, but Sir Edward Grey had made England's attitude quite clear on the previous day. His speech had been published in the Berlin papers. Furthermore, the Chancellor informed the Reichstag that England's position was perfectly clear, although he suppressed the fact that Germany had begun preparations for war with this country five days before, by ordering civilians to leave Heligoland, and despatching the *Königin Luise* to lay mines on our coasts.

In any case, the action of the Social Democrats on that occasion is an example of unfaithfulness to principles. Accepting the invasion fear as a ground for voting a loan for a war of defence, there is still no evident reason why they should vote funds for a war of aggression against Belgium. On the surface, there is no explanation for their cheers when Bethmann-Hollweg announced the invasion of two neutral States by Germany's armies.

Had they been tricked into supporting an alleged defensive war, there was still time to protest against German hordes overrunning two weak neighbouring countries. In spite of their terror

* Ibid., p. 16.

that they personally might suffer through the horrors of war, their vaunted humanitarianism led to no outcry against those same horrors being wilfully and ruthlessly forced upon their Belgian *Genossen.*

The only anxiety which the speech of their chosen spokesman, Herr Haase, betrays, is the anxiety to avoid responsibility. "In the name of my party I am empowered to make the following declaration: We are standing in an hour of solemn destiny. The consequences of the imperialistic policy—which brought about an era of armaments and made international difficulties more acute—have now fallen upon Europe like a storm-flood.

"The responsibility for this recoils upon the leaders of that policy; we decline to accept it. Social Democracy has fought against this ominous development with all the forces at its command. Up to the very last hour we have worked for the maintenance of peace through mighty demonstrations in every land, especially in intimate co-operation with our French brothers. (Applause from the Social Democrats.) Our efforts have been in vain.

"Now we are face to face with the stern reality of war. We are threatened by the terrors of a hostile invasion. To-day we have not to decide either for or against war, but only concerning the necessary means for the defence of our country. Now we have to think of the millions of our

Genossen who are innocently swept into this fate. They will suffer most through the devastations of war. Our ardent wishes accompany also our brothers who are called to the flag without distinction of party. (Loud applause.)

"We think, too, of the mothers who must give their sons and of the women and children who are robbed of their bread-winners, and to whose fear for their loved ones is added the dread of hunger. Tens of thousands of wounded and mutilated warriors will soon be added to these. We consider it our most compelling duty to help them, to lighten their burdens and relieve their distress.* (Loud applause.)

"In case of a victory for Russian despotism, which is already stained with the blood of Russia's best sons, much—if not everything—is at stake for our people and our free future. It is a question of averting this danger, and of securing the culture and independence of our own country. (Loud applause.)

"Now we will redeem our oft repeated pledge: In the hour of danger we shall not leave our Fatherland in the lurch. (Loud applause.) Thereby, we feel ourselves in unison with the principles of internationalism which have always admitted the right of each single people to national independence and national defence. We condemn, as internationalism does, every war of conquest.

* There is every reason to believe that the party has worked hard to keep this promise.—Author.

"We demand, that, as soon as the goal of security has been attained and our enemies are inclined to make peace, the war shall end by a peace that will make friendship with neighbouring countries possible. We demand this, not only in the interests of the international solidarity for which we have uniformly fought, but also in the interests of the German nation.

"We hope that the cruel school of war's sufferings will awaken a horror for war in new millions, and win them over to the socialistic ideal and international peace. Guided by these principles we vote in favour of the war loan. (Loud applause.)"*

A short historical comparison will assist in making the Social Democratic action still clearer. In 1870, when Bismarck asked the Reichstag for a war credit to prosecute the campaign against France, the Socialists were few and helpless. Yet Liebknecht and Bebel refused to vote in its favour. "Their moral demonstration was in itself perfectly logical, for Bismarck's and Napoleon III.'s intrigues equally deserved condemnation."†

Apparently it did not occur to the Democrats in 1914, that probably Germany had again been guilty of intrigues. It is noteworthy, however, that the small party in 1870 protested when a national issue was at stake, while the mighty party

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 5th.

† Kautsky: "Die Internationalität und der Krieg," p. 19.

of 1914 made no protest whatever, although, as they had previously announced and denounced, the issue had been raised by the unjust actions and vile intrigues of Austrian imperialism.

The campaign against Russia conducted by the nationalist Press up till August 1st was taken up by the organs representing Social Democracy, immediately war broke out. Their papers were flooded with appalling pictures of Russian (generally termed Asiatic) barbarism, tyranny and misrule. Passages from the speeches and writings of Bebel, Liebknecht and others were quoted to show the fiendishness of Russian policy, and the justice of every German doing his utmost to smash Czarism and deliver millions of fellow workmen from its thrall. Even a blood-and-thunder story of the Russian police was turned on as a serial story in their daily papers.* In short, nothing was omitted which goes to make *Stimmung*.

Had they been honestly impartial a still blacker picture of Austria, painted by one of the founders of the workmen's movement, might have been quoted, yet it might have been indiscreet to tell Germans what Lassalle wrote. "Austria? Russia is a mammoth, barbarian Empire which its despotic rulers endeavour to civilize, just so far as suits their despotic interests. In that country barbarism is excusable, because it is a national element.

* "Der Polizeimeister, ein russischer Polizeiroman," by Gabryela Zapolska. The story commenced in the Nuremberg party organ on August 11th, and in Kautsky's *Leipziger Volkszeitung* on August 18th.

But the case is very different with Austria. There it is the government which represents the barbaric principle and crushes beneath it by artifice and violence, the civilized peoples under its rule."*

With the exception of a few Britishers, the Socialists of all countries have unanimously condemned the attitude of the German party. Not the least interesting is the condemnation expressed by the Italian section. Dr. Südekum, Reichstag member for Nuremberg, was sent to Italy to discuss the situation with Italian Socialists and justify their own action in supporting the war. The following account of the meeting appeared in the *Vorwärts* for September 12th: "The meeting lasted from 3.30 p.m. till 7 p.m. Südekum declared that he had come to inform their Italian comrades of the situation in which the German Socialists found themselves, and in order to learn whether the Italians had taken any steps to keep up communications with Democrats in other lands.

"We hold firmly to the contention that the German Socialists could have done nothing except what they did. My presence here is a proof that we Germans are aware of our duties towards internationalism.† We believed that the German Government had given proof of its peaceful ten-

* Bernstein's edition of Lassalle's "Reden und Schriften," vol. I., p. 306.

† There is no evidence to show that Südekum's Italian visit had any other purpose than winning over the sympathies of Italian Socialists and with them, the whole Italian nation for the purposes of German nationalism.—Author.

dencies and was forced into war against its will. Therefore, the Social Democratic Party supported it

"Della Seta answered that this was no justification for giving their support. The Italian Socialists would not have given their assistance under the same circumstances, just as they had refused to vote in favour of the Libyan war.

"Dr. Südekum replied that the German Socialists were compelled to defend their Fatherland against Czarism. Further, he repeated Haase's declaration in the Reichstag and continued: 'I am astonished that the Italian Socialists are able to believe, that so strong a party as the German Democrats, had denied their ideals, and been untrue to their task. You must admit that no other way was open to us, except to grant the credit demanded.'

"After this, he asserted the nationalist Press of France and Italy was working against Germany, and it seemed as if the Italian comrades were in agreement with Italian nationalists in endeavouring to maintain the existing condition of affairs* in Italy.

"Finally Südekum concluded by pointing out that the German Democrats had neither the intention, nor the right, to influence the attitude of the Italian Socialists, but were merely endeavouring to link up hearty international intercourse again.

* "The existing condition of affairs" seems to mean Italian neutrality. —Author.

" In reply Della Seta said he found it remarkable that the German Socialists had appealed to their Italian comrades in this solemn hour, all the more remarkable because intentions might easily be ascribed to this intervention. 'This is a serious motive which impels us to state our opinions with unreserved frankness.'

" He continued: 'Your defence does not convince us. You speak of France being allied with us, and of England, Germany's enemy. But we speak of our France, revolutionary France, Jauré's France. The French Socialists opposed the military preparations made by France, you Germans did not do the same in your country, or at least, only up to the point where the imperialistic feelings of the Kaiser and his party might be hurt.

" 'The point of view of German Democrats coincides with that of German imperialism. German predominance means for us a far greater danger than Czarism, because Czarism prevents the German army from marching on Paris, and thus protects the banner of France, which in spite of all mistakes and errors, is still the most revolutionary.

" 'Germany's motto is: *Deutschland über alles* and you have not opposed it; but you have published in the *Vorwärts* an appreciation of the Kaiser alleging that he had worked during twenty-five years for peace.

" 'You speak of German civilization being in danger. But in this civilization we can find no

trace of culture, when you attack and torture neutral Belgium, and complete the destruction of Louvain. Taken as a whole, German Socialists are just as plausible and use the same excuses as the Ministers of the German Government.*

"'We are enraged at the terrible fact that Germany has violated Belgium's neutrality, and you have not even protested. We tell you quite openly that we honour and weep for devastated Belgium, and tremblingly follow the fate of France.'"

Südekum had no words with which to answer this terrible indictment, and the *Vorwärts* could only add the following comment:

"We consider the judgment of our Italian comrades to be one-sided, but for reasons easy to understand, desist from discussing it in the present situation. Unfortunately we must recognize the fact, however, that the Italian view is widespread among the Socialists of other neutral countries."

Germany's revolutionary party lost no time in hoisting the banner of "no annexations." The *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, second in importance only to the *Vorwärts*, nailed down a phrase in the Kaiser's speech from the throne, which stated: "We are inspired by no desire for conquest." In commenting on this phrase, Kautsky's organ said:

* Might not this also be said of Messrs. Morel, Macdonald, Bernard Shaw, etc., and the *Labour Leader*, whose writings on the war have been scattered broadcast throughout Germany during the last six months?

"The part of the speech which excites most sympathy in us is the admission that Germany cherishes no lust for conquest. At the proper time we shall refer to that again.

"It is with sincere regret that we see the French Government on the side of the criminal Powers, which have enslaved and robbed the Russian people. If Germany, in a delirium of victory, should raise claims which mean annexation, then we shall—that must be repeated again—recall the speech from the throne of the German Kaiser on August 4th, 1914."*

During the first year of war a split among the Social Democrats has become evident, and it appears certain that it is the annexation question which is causing the cleavage. In December last Liebknecht abstained from voting when the second war loan was granted by the Reichstag. Evidently doubts have arisen in a small section of the party either as to the origin of the war, or in regard to the objects which the German Government hopes to attain.

On August 20th, 1915, Dr. Liebknecht put this question in the Reichstag: "Is the Government prepared to enter into immediate peace negotiations on the basis that Germany renounces all annexation claims and assuming that the other Powers in question are willing to negotiate?" Von Jagow replied: "I believe the great majority of the members will agree with me, when I refuse

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 4th.

to answer the question, as being at present beside the purpose."

The reply evoked a hurricane of "bravos."

A parallel may be found in the year 1870. The central committee of German Social Democrats passed a resolution that: "It is absolutely necessary for the party to organize simultaneously in all parts of the country great popular demonstrations against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, and pass resolutions in favour of an honourable peace with the French republic."

Nothing came of the movement, for on September 9th the committee was placed under arrest and prosecuted. If Germany should be victorious in this war, it is to be assumed that the Socialists would again prove powerless to prevent annexation. What the allies cannot hinder, the Social Democrats would be still more helpless to prevent; especially as the great majority of them are unreservedly on the side of the Kaiser and his Government. When in need, the latter flattered and persuaded the Democrats to vote for an alleged war of defence; but should German arms be victorious the German Government would neither seek, nor accept advice on her national projects, from her quondam internationalists.

There are grounds for suspicion that the party is playing a game desired by the Berlin Government. For some months past they have tried every means possible to arrange personal interviews with the leaders of the corresponding party

in France—the French "comrades" have refused to meet them. The *Leipziger Volkszeitung* for July 16th, 1915, contains more than a column about "We and the French," in which the German party spreads the usual Teutonic lime of sophistry and empty phrases.

One passage betrays the entire intrigue. They wish their "French brothers" to agree to a peace without annexations, which means, in so many words, that the French Socialists are to renounce Alsace-Lorraine for ever. Had they been, or should they be in the future, so foolish as to enter this German mouse-trap, then before the war has reached a decisive conclusion, a large section of the French nation would be pledged to renounce the lost provinces even in case of a German defeat. This is an excellent instance of the manner in which German Social Democracy works in an enemy country to assist its own Government. In like manner, the Independent Labour Party and Union of Democratic Control are forces exceedingly sensitive to German influence, and in a decisive moment can be set in motion by the German "comrades."

The hundred and eleven Social Democrats in the Reichstag have no real power in Germany. If they possess any degree of power, then fear for their own skins, prevents them from risking its exercise. Their real opinion concerning Alsace-Lorraine appeared in the same journal four days later. "According to our opinion it would be

a crime, if France made the return of these provinces a condition of peace." In the same article an accusation of one-sidedness is made against the Socialists in France for supporting the French Government. After which, it is not surprising that every time the names of the *Genossen* Macdonald, Snowden, Hardie and Newbold occur in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, they are mentioned with awe and reverence.

"Besides Ramsay Macdonald and Philip Snowden, our friend J. T. Walton Newbold has got on the nerves of the English patriots."* These gentlemen invariably receive polite mention, but French Socialists are evidently in disfavour—presumably because they know too well the German game.

The peace programme of the German Socialists has been published. An official declaration of the party which appeared on August 23rd, 1915, gives the following conditions.

"While caring for the national interests and rights of our own people, and at the same time respecting the vital interests of all nations, German Social Democracy strives for a peace which bears the guarantee of permanence, and will bring the European States closer together in matters of justice, culture, and commerce. In this sense we have drawn up the following scheme:

"I. The security of German independence and the entirety of the German Empire, which implies

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, July 23rd, 1915.

the rejection of all annexation plans on the part of our opponents. That includes the French plan to re-incorporate Alsace-Lorraine with France, no matter in what form that end may be sought.

"II. In order to secure free economic development for the German nation, we demand:

"(*a*) The 'open door,' *i.e.*, equal rights for commercial and such-like activities in all colonial territories.

"(*b*) The inclusion of the most-favoured-nation clause in the articles of peace of all the nations now at war.

"(*c*) The furthering of an economic entente by abolishing tariffs, etc., as far as possible.

"(*d*) The equalization and improvement of the social-political institutions according to ideals aimed at by the workmen's international party.

"(*e*) The freedom of the seas is to be guaranteed by an international treaty. To this end the right of capture at sea must be abolished, and all straits and narrows of importance for world commerce, must be internationalized.

"III. In the interests of Germany's security and the free exercise of commerical and economic efforts in South-Eastern Europe, we reject all the warlike aims of the Quadruple Alliance to weaken or disintegrate Austria-Hungary and Turkey.

"IV.—In consideration of the fact that the annexation of territories inhabited by another race

transgresses the rights of nations to govern themselves; furthermore because thereby, the unity and strength of Germany would be weakened and her foreign relations seriously and permanently injured, we oppose the plans in that direction cherished by shortsighted conquest-politicians.*

"V.—The terrible destruction and sufferings brought upon humanity by this war have won over millions of hearts to the ideal of a world peace, permanently secured by an international court of justice. The attainment of this end must be recognized as the highest moral duty of all those who are appointed to the work of framing a peace. Therefore we demand that an international arbitration court shall be created which shall settle all future difference between the nations."†

This imaginary peace-treaty is what Germans would call a *Zankapfel* (apple of discord). It may represent the serious opinions of Germany's greatest political party, but the German Government will welcome it because it will give Germany's sympathizers in France, England, Italy and Russia an excellent weapon with which they can attack their respective Governments, and hamper them in protecting their national interests. It will doubtless be an inspiration to the members of the I. L. P. and the U. D. C.‡

* There are two and a half lines of dots at this point. Probably the German censor has cut out a sentence.

† *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 23rd, 1915.

‡ Above prophecy written end of August; fulfilled in the *Labour Leader* October 28th.—Author.

If the German Government seriously formulated such proposals, the author believes that all Britishers worthy of the name would simply answer: "Fight on!" On this assumption the proposals deserve no discussion.

Yet the document is interesting as revealing the mind of Social Democratic Germany. These sublime Pharisees are unconscious of Belgium's wrongs and Germany's crimes. The former deserve no compensation and the latter no penalty. Here we are on the bed-rock of their ideas of justice and humanitarianism. Still we are not altogether surprised, because the Democratic newspaper organs have openly defended and justified the atrocities committed by German soldiers, and whenever any particularly damning evidence has been produced their parole has consistently been: "At any rate, now is not the time to discuss it." According to their comprehension the only time for discussion is when Europe is under the German heel. They are willing to discuss—when discussion can no longer injure the Fatherland, when Germany has gained all she wants.

The most remarkable metamorphosis which the German Democrats have undergone, is shown in their changed attitude to England. This country gave a home to Marx and Engels; the former is buried in Highgate cemetery. For many decades the party professed enthusiastic admiration of British institutions and our ideals of personal freedom. Their admiration for England was not

always convenient to the German Government, and was certainly a thorn in the side of the Kaiser.

In 1898 the party published a "Handbook for Social Democratic Voters," which contains lengthy explanations of their entire policy. Therein they justify their opposition to German naval expansion, and while conceding that naval supremacy is vital and indispensable to England, continue: "Boundless plans are veiled beneath the Navy Bill (1897). The hotspurs among the water-patriots dream of a first-class navy which might rival, yes, even surpass the British fleet.

"For the water-patriots the Navy Bill means an instrument to further their unlimited *Weltpolitik* and schemes of conquest; a weapon with which to realize their mad imaginings of a greater Germany. They desire to employ it as a tool for their absolutist plans and adventurous world enterprises.

"It increases the risk of foreign conflicts. At the same time it brightens the prospects of success of those influential circles which—impelled by an overpowering impulse to deeds, and inspired by a diseased longing for prestige—press on from excitement to excitement, from daring to daring, and from crisis to crisis."

This remarkable prophecy has been verified by history, but with its realization, the party which made it has been converted to the side of their former opponents. To-day the Social Democrats are just as hearty in the desire to see Britain over-

thrown and British naval supremacy smashed as is the Kaiser's Government.

No impartial thinker dare deny that the British fleet has been the principal factor in preventing Europe's subjugation to German autocracy, and the world to German militarism. Yet the so-called party of freedom prays earnestly that this fleet may be destroyed. This represents the tone of their daily Press, and the change of attitude has been proved to be scientifically correct in various books published by their leaders during the present year. One of these works will be quoted at considerable length, because of its importance in showing what the "pioneers of liberty" wish, may be the end of the "home of liberty." The work bears the title, "German Social Democracy and the World War;"* its author is a Socialist member of the Reichstag.

In dealing with England he refers to their former admiration for this country and proceeds to prove that it was wrong—wrong in the interests of Germany, and the world. England's fight against Napoleon for European freedom Dr. Lensch disposes of in a sentence: "Consumed by greed, England took the long-yearned-for opportunity and fell upon her rival, France" (p. 16).

He informs his readers that England and Russia are two beasts of prey. England's disarmament proposals were only intended to secure her naval

* "Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie und der Weltkrieg," by Dr. Paul Lensch, published by the Vorwärts Publishing House. Berlin, 1915.

supremacy, because Germany seemed to be escaping from the strangulation cord which England had drawn tight round her throat. Therefore three problems present themselves to Dr. Lensch, which the war must solve:

(1.) Shall the German people continue to exist as an independent nation?

(2.) Shall the danger of Czarism continue to threaten West European culture?

(3.) Shall Britain's naval supremacy be eternalized or overthrown, seeing that Britain only allows other nations to develop, so far as they are compatible with her national interests? (p. 15).

"England's oft-praised freedom is based upon the enslavement of the world; the peoples now recognize that England's wealth, freedom, and greatness are merely the corollary to their poverty, slavery and wretchedness (p. 20).

"International Socialism has not the slightest interest in helping to bolster up this supremacy (p. 22).

"When this monopoly is broken the English working classes will lose their present privileged position. They will be reduced to the same level as the workmen of other lands. Then Socialism will flourish in England (p. 23).*

"No party stands to lose more by a British victory than Social Democracy. The overthrow

* The author had fondly imagined that the British workman stood foremost as the result of his own battles. In any case, it is to be hoped that British Socialists will be grateful for "Genosse" Lensch's prayers for their downfall.

of England's world-position would clear the way for the continuation of the world's progress on the right historical lines, and its economic development (p. 25).

"In the present world war the interests of the internationalists are bound up in a German victory. Hence a German victory would be a victory for Marx's internationalism, and only then, would the hearts and heads of English workmen be open to the intellectual schooling of the Socialistic idea (p. 27).

"As early as the eighties in the last century, Friedrich Engels proved that the ruin of England's industrial monopoly had begun. What the scientist had foretold, became evident to all eyes two decades later. The social system of the greatest, world-ruling industrial State was shaken to its foundations. International Socialists had every reason to welcome this peaceful downfall of England's world power" (pp. 21–22).

"Marx once wrote that war is like a locomotive in the history of the world. May this war have that effect and under full steam lead to a finish the work which peaceful development had already commenced, *i.e.*, the downfall of English supremacy. If the war hastens and concludes this process, then the sacrifices in blood and treasure will not have been in vain. A great stumbling-block to human progress and especially to the proletarian fight for freedom will have been hurled out of the way" (pp. 27–8).

Having failed during a peaceful fight of over forty years, to hurl German autocracy and militarism out of the world, these hot-headed pioneers of liberty (Kaiserdom ?) wish to destroy the very State which was their place of refuge when German "liberty" overwhelmed them with its kindly attentions.

Still we cannot be too grateful to Dr. Lensch for his lucid statement. It is an effective reply to Germany's sympathizers in this country, and if British workmen should ever see these lines, it will interest them to know that German Socialists are anxious to pull them down a little, in the belief that if British workmen are cut short in their luxuries they will become better Socialists and Internationalists.

Dr. Lensch has only one step more to take, and he will certainly gain the highest German order—*pour le mérite*. The famous Communist manifesto of Marx and Engels concludes with the words: "Proletarians of all lands, unite!" It is much to be desired that Dr. Lensch should amend this by adding to Marx's phrase a few words, so that the amended form would run:

"Proletarians of all lands, unite to sing 'Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles.'" By this simple means the learned doctor would condense the entire teachings of his book into a single sentence.

"The position to-day is that the interests of freedom and democracy are utterly at variance with a French victory (p. 42).

" Greater Prussia was founded by the war of 1866, while the 1870 struggle established a Little Germany. Through the present war Great Germany will be created " (p. 46).

On another page this Socialist-Chauvinist proclaims that " the freedom of the oppressed must be the work of the oppressed themselves," which is a principle that the I. L. P. and U. D. C., etc., would do well to note. " The peculiarity of our situation is to be found in the fact that extraordinarily advanced ideals have penetrated into our unripe conditions."*

It is to these " unripe conditions " that Lensch, Liebknecht, David, Hildenbrand and the remaining leaders of German Social Democracy should give their undivided attention. Last year the Berlin Government published a record of crimes committed in Germany. It is the most awful record of any nation in the world, and the above gentlemen would do well to study Volume 267 of the *Vierteljahrshefte*. There were hundreds of thousands of brutal crimes committed in Germany by German proletarians during the year 1912.

For half a century Marx, Lassalle, Bebel, Liebknecht and their successors have been busily engaged in intellectualizing Germany's proletarians ; now it is advisable for the Socialist party to begin the work of humanizing them. Their efforts

* Louis Bamberger in an essay on German Social Democracy in the *Deutsche Rundschau*, vol. 14, p. 243.

to internationalize the world have resulted in a hopeless *débâcle ;* let them now begin the task of humanizing Germany. They have all evidently forgotten the German proverb : *Kehr vor deiner eignen Tür !* (Sweep first before your own door.)

CHAPTER VII

"NECESSITY KNOWS NO LAW"

ON August 2nd, 1914, Belgium announced her neutrality in the European war; France had already declared her intention to respect Belgian neutrality at all costs. On the other hand we have Bethmann-Hollweg's word that he knew French armies were standing ready to strike at Germany through Belgium. This statement he has never supported by any proof, nor even mentioned his authority for the same.* In view of

* So-called "evidence" has been given by Richard Grasshoff in his book "Belgien's Schuld" ("Belgium's Guilt"), pp. 14-20. Grasshoff quotes the sworn statements of a German corporal who resided in Boitsfort, near Brussels. The corporal states that he saw two French and one English officer in Brussels on July 26th, and eight French soldiers on July 29th.

The statements of three French soldiers, prisoners of war in Germany, are also cited; these men maintain that they entered Belgium on the 31st of July and the 2nd of August.

With regard to this "evidence," we must note that Grasshoff is a German official, the corporal a German spy, and that the Frenchmen have made these statements in a prisoners' camp, a place where they were exposed to the temptation of German gold and the influence of Teutonic bullying. Lastly, the Berlin General Staff has recorded that the German armies first came in touch with French troops on August 19th, near Namur.

the facts that no military preparations had been made on the Franco-Belgian frontier, and that the German armies first came into contact with French forces long after the fall of Liége, we are compelled to declare the German Chancellor's statement to be a pure invention.

Moreover Germany's excuse for invading Belgium is given in the title of this chapter. Had Germany possessed any proof that French officers in disguise were organizing preparations in Belgium, or that French airmen had crossed the latter's territories in order to drop bombs by Wesel, etc., then Bethmann-Hollweg would have had no reason to admit in the Reichstag that his country was committing a breach of international law. Under such circumstances Belgian neutrality would no longer have existed; the Chancellor, instead of "necessity," could have pleaded justification and the world could scarcely have withheld its approval.

In the early hours of August 4th the Germans crossed the Belgian frontier, although the *Cologne Gazette* had published a notice three days before announcing that Germany had no intention whatever of taking the step, and that no German troops were near the frontier.

General von Emmich immediately issued this proclamation in French: "To my great regret German troops have been compelled to enter Belgian territory. They are acting under the compulsion of unavoidable necessity, for French officers in disguise have already violated Belgian neutrality

by trying to reach Germany, via Belgium, in motor-cars.*

"Belgians! it is my most ardent desire that it may yet be possible to avoid a struggle between two peoples which up till now, have been friends, formerly even allies. Remember the glorious days of La Belle Alliance, when German arms helped to found the independence and future of your Father-land.

"Now we must have a free way. The destruction of tunnels, bridges and railways will be considered hostile actions. Belgians! you have to choose. The German army does not intend to fight against you, but seeks a free path against the enemy who wishes to attack us. That is all we desire.

"Herewith I give the Belgian people an official pledge that they will not have to suffer under the terrors of war; that we will pay ready money for all necessaries which we may have to requisition; that our soldiers will show themselves the best friends of a nation for which we have the highest esteem and ardent affection. It depends upon your prudence and your patriotism whether your land shall be spared the horrors of war." (Appeared in the *Cologne Gazette*, August 6th.)

A Dresden paper of the same date contains an illuminating statement. "We have just received

* One wonders what military purpose these officers had in view. They would have been inevitably arrested at the German frontier. The fable was made public by Wolff's Agency, and has been ridiculed even by the German Press, *vide* pp. 96-7.

official information that the German General Staff had been informed by an absolutely reliable source that the French intended to march through the valley of the Meuse into Belgium. The execution of this plan had already commenced, therefore France was by no means prepared to respect Belgian neutrality."

"For years past the King of Belgium has conspired with England behind the backs of his ministers, to damage German interests. His telegram to the King of England was a trick planned long ago. These facts will soon be supplemented by a large number of documentary proofs; from this the necessity has arisen to direct Germany's advance through Belgium irrespective of neutrality considerations."*

Here we have the first clumsy attempts to prove that Belgian neutrality did not exist. These afterthoughts have grown during the past year into no inconsiderable literature. Probably the two motives which have inspired Germany—official and unofficial—to print many volumes on Belgian neutrality have been the indignation aroused in neutral countries and the fact that a complete German victory was not obtained in three months of war.

German newspapers again betray the plot against Belgium, and a search through their files reveals in the clearest manner possible how Wolff's Bureau was again the source of a widespread campaign to

* *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, August 9th.

prove that Germany was right, and simultaneously to lash public opinion into hatred for the Belgian "barbarians and beasts."

In the first few days of August the Press was filled with reports concerning the murder and ill treatment of Germans in Belgium, before any act of war had taken place. No doubt a justified fear for the mighty, brutal neighbour existed in the popular imagination, and fear may be the father of ill-considered deeds. Nevertheless, there is no proof that mob law prevailed in Belgium, as it did in Germany. Moreover, the latter country outlawed herself when she proclaimed the law of necessity. In the light of this consideration the German outcry that the Belgians were breaking both the laws of humanity and international jurisprudence lacks sincerity and remains unconvincing.

A country which announces her intention to ignore existing laws and "hack a way through at all costs," should surely be the last to declaim on the alleged offences against the laws of war by a small, weak, unprepared neighbour. If these considerations are insufficient, there remains the fact that Germany herself began war against unarmed Belgian civilians.

During the night following the unsuccessful *coup de main* against Liége, a Zeppelin attacked the town and dropped bombs. "On Thursday, August 6th, at 3.30 a.m. Z 6 returned from an aircruise over Belgium. The airship took a con-

spicuous part in the attack on Liége, and was able to intervene in a markedly successful manner. Our first bomb was dropped from a height of 1,800 feet, but failed to explode. The ship then sank to 900 feet above the city, and a non-commissioned officer dropped twelve more bombs, all of which exploded, setting the city ablaze in several places."*

An Austrian who was in the town afterwards described the attack in the *Grazer Tagespost.* According to this witness it was already daylight when the airship appeared, and the effect of the bombs was truly awful. In view of the circumstance that it was already light, Germany cannot put forward the defence that the bombs were intended for the twelve forts which surround Liége at a distance of some miles.

This is the earliest official record of an attack upon civilians—and it came from the German side! The crew of Z 6 were the recipients of a tremendous ovation on their return, while the news of this dastardly murder was received with jubilation throughout the German Empire. In Lunéville fifteen civilians were killed by airship bombs two days earlier; shortly afterwards followed the attack by airship on civilians in Antwerp.

The author has before him about one hundred different newspaper reports, alleging the most awful barbarism on the part of the Belgians. Among the numerous statements that Germans

* German official report in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, August 10th.

were murdered, only two names are mentioned, and both these men are alive to-day; the one is Herr Weber, proprietor of an hotel in Antwerp.

"We have now received full details of the murder of the German, Weber. He had fled from his pursuers and hidden himself in a cellar. As the raging mob could not find him they burnt sulphur in the house, which caused Weber to break into a violent fit of coughing. This betrayed his hiding-place; he was dragged out and murdered."*

"The German pork-butcher, Deckel, who had a large business in Brussels, was attacked in his house by a crowd of Belgian beasts because he had refused to hang a Belgian flag before his shop; with axes and hatchets the mob cut off his head and hewed his corpse in pieces."†

A few days later the *Berliner Tageblatt* informed its readers that Herr Deckel was residing in Rotterdam, and had suffered no harm whatever.

Readers who are acquainted with the official record of brutal crimes committed year by year in Germany and the haughty contempt for civilian rights which the whole German army has consistently shown in the Fatherland, during the orderly times of peace, will require little imagination to

* *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, August 12th, and simultaneously in many other journals. On the following day the *Vorwärts* announced that Herr Weber had returned to Germany in the company of their own correspondent.

† *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, August 10th.

conceive that this same army would show still less consideration for civilians in a country which they were wrongfully invading.

The German Press during the last thirty years, as well as many books published in the Fatherland, contains ample proof of German brutality at home, and above all, of the legal brutality of German non-commissioned and commissioned officers. How can Germany expect the world to believe, that these same men, were transformed into decent human beings by the mere act of stepping over the Belgian frontier ?

Granted that vulgar elements of the Belgian population did transgress, there still remains incontrovertible evidence that almost unheard-of kindness was shown to the invading army, and that Germans had displayed brutal insolence to Belgians before a state of war had been declared. Nearly every single letter from soldiers, published in German papers, records the fact that in the villages through which they passed they were given water, wine and food, while payment was in many cases refused.

It is part of Germany's policy to blacken Belgium's character in order to justify her own ruthlessness—naturally Wolff's Agency was one of the principal tools to that end.

" Much as we condemn the excesses of the Belgians, still we must not wreak vengeance on the whole nation as a section of our Press demands. Have not harmless and defenceless foreigners been

terribly ill-treated in Germany without distinction of sex? Have not shops and restaurants been demolished in hundreds, wherever a French word was to be met? And the rage of the German masses has found an outlet not only against foreigners, but against good German patriots and even German officers."*

The same journal on the preceding day deplored that "we ourselves are not free from guilt." It recounts how German reservists, when leaving Antwerp and Brussels, had sung their national songs in a loud, provocative manner, and taunted the bystanders with such remarks as: "In three days we shall be here again!"

According to the same authority German residents had insulted the populace by displaying their national flag; and German employers had been among the first to discharge employees of their own nationality, without salary in lieu of notice, thus increasing the difficulties of German residents in Belgium.

German official pronouncements are much more reticent in their judgment on these allegations of Belgian cruelties. None the less the Berlin Government must be held responsible for them being scattered throughout the land. After Germany's official representative had returned from Brussels to Berlin he made a statement to the Press. Con-

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, August 12th. This journal as well as the *Fränkische Tagespost* names Wolff's Agency as their authority in more than one issue.

sidering that von Below was in the Belgian capital at the time, his views are instructive.

He expressed his great astonishment that such things should have happened, and asserted that up till the very last minute he had been treated with the greatest kindness and politeness. Neither he nor any of his Legation Staff had experienced the slightest unpleasantness. Further, von Below expressed the conviction that only single instances of such excesses had occurred and these were a result of the quarrelsome Walloon character. No village *fête* passes off among them without such outbreaks, accompanied by bloodshed.*

German papers of August 15th reported this official version, and four days later a proclamation was issued by State Secretary Dr. Delbrück, calling upon all persons who had been ill-treated in Belgium to report themselves, so that the "numerous" newspaper reports could be confirmed or refuted. The result of the inquiry has never been published.

From a number of witnesses who testified wholeheartedly to Belgian kindness, one will suffice. A lady reported her adventures in the *Vorwärts* of September 6th, from which the following sentences have been gleaned. "Even if it is true that Germans were subjected to inconsideration and ill-treatment during their flight from Belgium, still there are hundreds of Germans who, like myself, met with generous sympathy and unstinted help.

* This may be true, but von Below could have said the same with absolute truth of German village fairs, *Kirmesse*, etc.—Author.

"A Flemish servant refused her month's wages, saying that her employers would need it on the journey. Many Germans were offered homes in Belgian families till the war was over. My own landlord in Brussels placed an empty flat at my disposal for German refugees. At parting he and his wife were as deeply moved as we, and when I began to make excuses for being unable to pay the rent, she at once prevented me from speaking another word. My husband was provided with a hat which looked less 'German;' they filled our pockets with provisions for the journey, and after his wife had embraced me and my child we left the house in silence.

"German refugees whom I met afterwards, related hundreds of similar acts of kindness. When such severe accusations are raised against the entire Belgian people, justice demands this statement that Belgians in hundreds of cases, uninfluenced by the prevailing bitterness, showed themselves kindly, helpful and humane towards the Germans."

In the second month of the war two representatives of the Social Democratic Party received special permission from the General Staff to visit Belgium and the theatre of war in Northern France. Their report has been issued by the Vorwärts Publishing House.*

"Concerning the events and conditions in

* "Kriegsfahrten durch Belgien und Nordfrankreich" ("Journeys n War Time through Belgium, etc."), by Dr. Adolph Koester and G. Noske,

Belgium many false reports have been spread abroad. That is especially the case in regard to the terrible persecutions of Germans immediately before the outbreak of war. The civil authorities (German) are now permitting full investigation in those parts of Belgium occupied by our troops, and it is already obvious that many exaggerations were circulated by German newspapers. Without doubt beer-houses and business houses were wrecked, but the Tartar stories which were reported in Germany and Belgium, Herr von Sandt, Chief of the Civil Administration, puts down to hysterics, and the desire of some people to make themselves important."*

No correct judgment on the apportionment of right and wrong between the Belgian civilians and the German army is possible without taking into consideration the status of militarism in each of these countries before the war. As far as Belgium is concerned, the army was looked upon as a necessary evil. The Social Democratic doctrines imported from Germany had obtained such a hold upon the people that the Belgian Government experienced ever-increasing difficulty in getting supplies voted in the House of Deputies, for defence purposes. Belgian Socialists unfortunately played into the hands of the German Government by doing their utmost to prevent money from being spent for the defence of their country. Consciously or unconsciously, German Socialists have rendered the

* Ibid., pp. 14–15.

Kaiser and his army inestimable service. Their propaganda against armaments has borne fruit in Belgium, England and France, but did not prevent a single German battleship from being built, nor a single regiment from being added to the German army.

In Germany militarism is a gospel. All classes and all political parties have been unanimous for years past, that every man should be a soldier. The military ethos has ruled supreme, and whenever civilianism has dared, merely to cherish thoughts contrary to the ideals of the ruling caste, no time was lost in seeking an opportunity to challenge a quarrel which invariably ended in humiliation for the civilian ethos. Characteristically, therefore, the contemptuous phrase has become current both in the German army and navy—"das Civil"—when speaking of the non-military elements of the nation.

Imbued with these traditions and inspired by this contempt for everything civilian, the German armies invaded Belgium, and it may be safely assumed that in a country where the civilian ethos predominated, looks, words, and even deeds, expressed hostility. Such "provocation" would certainly rouse the military ego to a revenge ten thousand-fold greater than that taken at Zabern. German militarism brooks neither contempt, criticism, nor opposition from German civilians, and much less so from the civilians of another nation.

When it is possible to obtain cool and clear

accounts of the events in Belgium, the author has no doubt whatever, that proofs of civilian-baiting will be forthcoming in that unhappy country. The policy of frightfulness was not only intended to drive an enemy into abject submission and as a punishment for resistance to Germany's imperious will, but it was the military ethos in strife with the civilian spirit.

In order to hinder the march of the invaders the trees lining the roads were cut down and formed into barriers, but the civilian population was compelled at the bayonet's point to remove all obstacles and thus assist in the conquest of their native country.

"The magnificent tall fir-trees which are so characteristic of Belgian roads, had been felled across the highways. But all the civilian population which could be found, without regard to age, rank, or sex, was forced by our advancing cavalry to clear it all away. One can imagine the joy of the Belgians in performing this task!"*

This writer, too, chronicles many instances of kindness. "I was billeted in a peasant's house at the western exit of the village. Three beautiful children, trembling with fear, watched us come in, for besides me there were twenty-four men. We had received emphatic warnings from headquarters not to allow soldiers to be billeted alone. The woman gave us everything she could find and it was

* "Unser Vormarsch bis zur Marne" ("Our advance to the Marne"), by a Saxon officer, p. 22.

almost necessary to use force to get her to accept payment."*

"A load of shot struck the ground at the feet of my horse. Before I had calmed the animal a N. C. O. marching at my side had finished off the dirty Belgian scoundrel, who was now hanging dead from a roof window.

"Foaming with rage, my field-greys surrounded the house, in which only a few of the dogs were taken captive, the others were immediately slaughtered. A boy hardly fifteen years old was dragged out of a wet ditch with a gun in his hand. Before being brought to me, this youthful swine had been thrashed from head to foot. Besides the men, two women and a girl were taken.

"Meanwhile a terrible hand-to-hand fight was going on throughout the long, scattered village. Infantry and artillerists smashed the doors and windows; no mercy was shown to anyone, and the houses were set alight. An attempt to storm the church-tower failed because the occupants fired from above. Bundles of straw were brought, paraffin poured on them, and the tower set on fire. Above the roar of the flames we could distinctly hear the shrieks of the murderers shut in there.

"I gave orders to a squad to shoot our prisoners, but a deadly bullet finished the career of the lying, scoundrelly priest as he was trying to escape. Our losses were remarkably small, only two men being killed and a number wounded."†

* Ibid., p. 25. † Ibid., p. 43–4.

In all cases where German soldiers asked for water from the inhabitants, the latter had to take a drink first. "Before tasting the water both man and wife had to drink first, and as this scene was repeated on innumerable occasions, it was delightful to observe the comic desperation with which the people took their involuntary 'water cure.'"*

Dr. Risse's interesting diary contains one or two important passages illustrating the relation between conquerors and conquered. Like many other German writers, he saw no hostile act on the part of the civilian population, but they came to him as rumours. "That night we slept in a barn. Here we heard that a village near Dahlem had been burned down because the inhabitants had cut the throat of a sleeping ambulance attendant.

"On continuing our march we suddenly entered a wide vale. The horizon was blood-red and huge clouds of smoke drifted heavenwards. On all sides the villages were in flames. In the last village before Louvain the sight was terrible in the extreme; houses ablaze; pools of blood in the street; here and there a dead civilian; pieces of Belgian equipment, haversacks, boots and trousers lay around; while the inhabitants stood about with their hands raised above their heads.

"It was said that hostile cavalry had hidden in the village and together with a part of the inhabi-

* "Mit der Kluck'schen Armee nach Belgien" ("With von Kluck's Army into Belgium"), by Dr. Jos. Risse, p. 17.

tants had fired on our troops. We only saw the consequences.

"After a long rest before Louvain we entered the town at 7 p.m. Our artillery had taken up a semi-circular position on the heights around and directed their cannon on to the town."*

The above events occurred on August 19th, exactly six days before the sack of Louvain. It strikes one as remarkable that the German cannon were even on that day directed against an unfortified city.

Risse was among the first German troops to enter Brussels. "Our route took us through some of the principal streets, and various splendid buildings including the Royal palace. Joy shone in our faces and a feeling of pride swelled our breasts at being the first to enter Belgium's capital. These feelings found expression in our talk and shouts. The man behind me shouted to every bewildered, staring Belgian whom we passed: 'Yes, young fellow, you are astonished, you blockhead!' On we marched with the air of victors.

"The inhabitants were exceedingly kind, so that one had not at all the feeling of being in the capital of an enemy. They brought us water, lemonade, beer, cigars, cigarettes, etc., without asking for any payment."†

The same writer refers to similar hospitality in

* Ibid., pp. 22–3. † Ibid., pp. 26–7.

various parts of his book. After passing through Brussels he continues his diary: "Sunday, August 23rd. Nothing came of our hopes for a rest-day. Shortly after 5 a.m. we were ready for the march. A fine rain was falling as we passed through village after village. We saw the villagers with frightened faces hurrying to church, carrying prayer-books. Notices from the Belgian Government were placarded on the houses, warning the people to avoid every kind of hostility towards the Germans."*

From the last sentence it is evident that the Belgian authorities did not incite the civilian population to resistance. Other German war-writers state that the Belgian and French Governments had organized a *franc-tireur* warfare long before, and this accusation is one of the pillars of Germany's defence for the destruction of Louvain.

"Soon after crossing the frontier we saw the first ruined house. Our route led us down the same road on which a few days before the violent and bitter struggles had taken place between German troops and Belgian soldiers, aided by the inhabitants. The Belgians have supported their troops in a manner which can only be described as bestial and cruel. From the houses they have shot at troops on the march, and of course their homes have been reduced to ashes.

"The road from Aix-la-Chapelle to Liége is one

* Ibid., p. 31.

long, sad line of desolation.* Otherwise the district is fertile; now, however, sadness and devastation reign supreme. Nearly every second house is a heap of ruins, while the houses which are still standing are empty and deserted.

"On every side signs of destruction; furniture and house utensils lie around; not a pane of glass but what is broken. Still the inhabitants themselves are to blame, for have they not shot at our poor, tired soldiers?"†

That is the utmost sympathy which any German has expressed for Belgium. The German public is fully informed of all that has been done, and considers that *they* have been brutally, wrongfully treated. Lord Bryce's report as well as the French and Belgian official reports have been dealt with at considerable length in the German Press, but receive no credence whatever; they are lies, all lies invented to blacken the character of poor, noble, generous Germany!

Germans are well aware of the awful number of brutal crimes which their men-folk commit year by year at home. Yet they are absolutely convinced that these same men are immediately transformed into chivalrous knights so soon as they don the Kaiser's uniform. They seem incapable of

* On September 8th, 1914, the Kaiser sent a long telegram to President Wilson, in which he defended the German armies against the charges of ruthless atrocities. He euphemistically stated that "a few villages have been destroyed."

† "Mit den Königin-Fusilieren durch Belgien" ("With the Queen Fusiliers through Belgium"), by H. Knutz, p. 13.

conceiving that a race which debauches its own women, can hardly be expected to show the crudest forms of respect to the women of an enemy people.

Herr Knutz—an elementary school-teacher in civilian attire, and a non-commissioned officer when in the German army—seems to possess some rays of human feeling. "Just as I was leaving the fort I saw seven or eight Belgian civilians guarded by our men with fixed bayonets. They were charged with firing on German soldiers. I must say that the lamentations of these men—aged from 20 to 50—made a deep impression on me. They had thrown themselves upon their knees, and with raised hands were weeping and beseeching that their lives might be spared.

"The villagers are exceedingly ignorant, and when their land is in danger, believe themselves justified in seizing any old shot-gun or revolver which lies at hand. Probably some of the more prudent are aware that it is a mad enterprise, but the instinct of self-defence is so innate in the simple country people that advice does not help in the least." (Von Bethmann-Hollweg and von Tirpitz justify the use of gas, the sinking of merchant vessels containing women and children, the dropping of bombs on open towns, etc., etc., by the plea of self-defence.—Author.)

"But it is otherwise with regard to the atrocities on our wounded; these are a stain on Belgium's national honour which will not easily be wiped

out. A German would never perpetrate such monstrous crimes,* and that we can say without any overweening opinion of ourselves."†

Herr Knutz offers no proof of the alleged atrocities; he has heard of them, believes and repeats the story. I have some fifty German books describing the war in Belgium, and in all of them similar legends are mentioned, but in no single instance is a case proved and nailed down. No victim is named, and the scene of the alleged atrocity is never given, hence it seems to be the usual German artifice to make *Stimmung*, *i.e.*, to raise feeling.

One thumb-nail picture from the teacher's diary shows that the Germans created only too well a *Stimmung* of abject terror among the Belgians.

"This morning, August 19th, we searched a small wood for Belgians, but found none. On leaving the wood a touching picture met our eyes. Several families were fleeing with their children, and the barest necessaries of life, into a neighbouring village. An old woman on crutches was trying in vain to keep up; a young mother with a sucking child was sobbing and pressing the babe to her bosom. The boys were weeping bitterly and holding their hands high to prove that they were harmless. We passed by the ruins of Roosbeck, where civilians had shot on the 20th

* This is hypocrisy or ignorance.—Author.

† Ibid., pp. 18–19.

Artillery Regiment, for which reason it was burnt down."*

Among the various interesting pictures of the Fatherland sketched by German authors perhaps the following is the most naïve: "English, French and Belgians, hand in hand; how nicely it was all thought out; Belgian neutrality—so solemnly pledged by all the Powers—was nothing but a screen behind which they wrought the most devilish plans against Germany. It was a neutrality which had long since been betrayed and sold by the Belgian Government.

"But the German people—a pure fool-like Parsifal, who could not conceive such treachery and knavery because it was incapable of such things itself—toiled and worked day by day, enjoyed the blessings of peace, was happy in its existence and ignorant of the looming clouds gathering on its frontiers. All hail to our chosen leaders who kept watch and ward over a dreaming people, and did not allow themselves to be lulled into watchlessness by the lies of our enemies, who while talking of peace intrigued for our annihilation."†

The same author's opinion of the Belgians coincides with that expressed by many of his fellow countrymen. "What did our troops find by the roadside? On all sides haversacks, straps,

* Ibid., p. 27.

† "Von Lüttich bis Flandern" ("From Liége to Flanders"), by Wilhelm Kotzde. Weimar, 1914; p. 5.

cartridges, caps, tunics and rifles. To our soldiers this was a remarkable sign of flight, for they are accustomed to military training of a different sort. In the forts, it is true, they found among the soldiers also civilians wearing patent-leather shoes. Indeed, the whole Belgian campaign has shown how badly the army was prepared and equipped.

"The lack of discipline and order is evident, however, in every department of Belgium's national life, and these virtues they endeavoured to replace by cunning and cruelty—at least among the Walloons."*

A Knight of the Order of St. John† is still more cynical in his condemnation of the conquered enemy: "The greatest misfortune in this land is unemployment; factories are inactive and shops closed. The horrors of famine draw nearer, and we, as well as some neutral countries, are endeavouring to relieve the tortures of want. But charity only encourages the laziness of the inhabitants. Just as the refugees in Holland, the Belgians who have remained in their land would like to put their hands in their pockets and be fed. Of course, that is not permissible, and the German Government does its best to rap these lazy wretches on the fingers."

"It was characteristic that the Belgians always

* Ibid., pp. 61–2.

† "Kriegsfahrten eines Johanniters," by Fedor von Zobeltitz, pp. 86–7.

placed their hopes on foreign help and never dared to rely on the strength of their own army. This alone is a serious symptom of national weakness. Still, the Belgian army has fought bravely. It is true they had not the discipline and preparation which distinguish the German troops, but everything which a badly equipped and trained army could achieve they have done."*

It is not necessary for the author of this work to write a song of glorification for Belgium; she has herself composed an epic of valour and self-sacrifice written in immortal deeds. At present her only reward seems to be a desolate land in the hands of the conqueror, and the graves of her fallen sons. Germany's evident intention is the annexation of that part of Belgium where Flemish is spoken. At the moment of writing, Goliath has vanquished David. France and England have a supreme duty to fulfil: they are called to avenge Belgium's wrongs, and thereby establish the principle that even necessity must recognize law.

* Wilhelm Kotzde: "Von Lüttich bis Flandern," p. 71.

CHAPTER VIII

ATROCITIES

THE question of Belgian atrocities is so important that no apology is required for giving the British public every possible opportunity to sift evidence, and above all, to hear the German side.

In the interests of fair play we will allow a German lawyer* to state the case against the Belgians. Herr Grasshoff is armed with two doctorates and is in practice as an advocate in one of the higher courts of law (*Kammergericht*). Chapter III. of his work is entitled: "The Belgian Outrages;" in the foregoing chapter he endeavours to show that the Belgian Press had worked upon public opinion and lashed it into such a state that atrocities and mutilations of Germans by Belgian men, women, boys and girls were the natural consequences.

"That the goaded rage of the lower classes found expression in nameless horrors is unfor-

* Richard Grasshoff: "Belgien's Schuld" ("Belgium's Guilt").

tunately a sorry truth. The proofs? We are not in a position to satisfy the desire for sensation with a cabinet of horrors. The equipment of the German army does not include either the jars or the chemical fluids for preserving hacked-off limbs, hence it is impossible to display exhibits as in a museum. Our hospitals do not admit the dead.

"If Germany should be compelled to conduct a second campaign against the cultured peoples of Western Europe, then she will not forget to add the above articles to her equipment in any future war against such opponents. Pitying mother earth covers the murdered victims."

This eloquent lawyer has overlooked the aid which the art of photography affords, and as the German army was well equipped with cameras, some tangible proofs could still have been procured—assuming there were any shred of truth in Germany's accusations. The Berlin Government has circulated photographs of dum-dum bullets, *i.e.*, English and French bullets with the points cut off. It is true no statement is offered regarding the time and place of the points being cut off, which leaves us free to believe that captured ammunition was "doctored" in this manner by the Germans themselves. "Necessity knows no law" is a principle capable of the widest application.

Grasshoff's work was only published a few months ago, so that he had ample time to collect

facts and proofs—the result is, six detailed cases with the names of his German informants and their regiments. In each case the "evidence" is of an exceedingly doubtful character; in view of the gravity of the charges, the lack of corroboration (each case is "proved" by one witness alone), and the partisanship of all concerned, we may safely conclude that no court of justice would convict on it.

The same criticism applies to the official White Book, published in June or July of the present year. Every witness had previously sworn an oath to protect the German flag (*der Fahneneid*) which precludes the probability of all impartiality in the witness and makes bias (*Befangenheit*) his simple duty. Another important factor to be borne in mind is the hysterical, morbid self-importance of the German nation in general, which causes police and members of the German army to shoot or cut down with the sword their own civilians for the most trivial offences, even in times of peace.

The White Book in question contains a six-page introduction stating the charges against Belgian civilians, and three hundred and seventeen pages of sworn evidence of German officers and soldiers taken for the most part in Belgium and France. A few extracts from the introduction will suffice to make the German side clear.

"Finally, there is not the slightest doubt that Belgian civilians robbed and killed German

wounded ; in short, mutilated them in a barbarous manner ; even women and young girls participated in these atrocities. Hence German wounded have had their eyes gouged out, noses, ears, fingers and genitals cut off and their bodies cut open ; in other cases German soldiers have been poisoned, hanged on trees, or had burning liquids poured on them, causing death in a most terrible form.

" This bestial behaviour on the part of the civilian population is a breach of Article I., Convention of Geneva,* and the principles of military law, as well as the principles of humanity " (p. 4).

" The guilt for these transgressions of international law lies largely at the door of the Belgian Government. The latter has made an attempt to rid itself of responsibility by ascribing the guilt to the rage for destruction in the German troops, who are accused of proceeding to deeds of violence without any reason or ground.†

" An examining commission has been appointed by the Belgian Government to inquire into the alleged cruelties of German soldiers, and the evidence thus obtained has been made the subject of diplomatic complaints. This attempt to pervert the truth has absolutely failed.

" The German army is accustomed to wage war against hostile troops, but not against peaceful

* Self-proclaimed outlaws cite the law when it suits their purpose !—Author.

† Certainly, just as in Germany in peace time.—Author.

citizens.* Investigations conducted by any examining commission whatsoever, can never dispose of the irrefutable fact that German troops were forced by Belgium's native population to take defensive measures in the interests of self-preservation.

"The refugees' tales collected by the Belgian commission and declared by them to be the result of an impartial investigation bear a stamp which makes them unworthy of belief. According to the nature of things, the commission is not in a position to test the veracity of such rumours or to apprehend the association of events. Hence, their accusations against the German army are nothing other than base slanders which are completely invalidated by the accompanying documents" (pp. 5–6).

It must be assumed that readers are acquainted with the official publications of the Belgian and French Governments accusing the German army with waging war in an atrocious manner, as well as the report of Lord Bryce's commission and Professor Morgan's report in the "Nineteenth Century" for June. In the above extract the Berlin Government rules them one and all out of court, which is the author's justification for making no use of their evidence.

Fortunately the Roman Catholic Church of Germany has published a refutation of Germany's

* German non-commissioned officers are accustomed to kick and beat German privates, and the behaviour of German soldiers to fellow-subjects is aptly illustrated by Lieutenant Förster fighting a pitched battle with a lame old cobbler in Zabern.—Author.

White Book, and surely this authority deserves credence. The work in question bears the title: "Der Lügengeist im Völkerkrieg," Kriegsmärchen gesammelt von Bernhard Duhr, S.J. ("The Spirit of Lying in the War of the Nations," War Legends collected by the Rev. Bernhard Duhr, S. J.).* The reverend gentleman castigates all the nations at war with the same offence—lying. His work should have permanent value in the literature of war psychology, but he only undertakes to expose German lies, and in his 72-paged booklet he proves to the hilt the charges made in this work.

In his introduction the Rev. Duhr states that the office of the Priests' Society "Pax" in Cologne has taken great pains to expose and refute lies as fast as they have appeared. The original documents are preserved in the above office and may be seen by anyone who cares to apply.

Probably one of the motives actuating the Society "Pax" and the Rev. B. Duhr was the intention to refute the accusations of cruel outrages by Belgian and French Catholic priests. Whatever their motives may have been, one thing is certain, they have produced most convincing proof of German mendacity. It is to be hoped that the "Pax" will give the world the benefit of all the documents in their possession.

Even the Kaiser had the audacity to state in his telegram of September 8th, 1914, to President

* The author hopes to publish a complete translation shortly.

Wilson that "women and priests have been guilty of atrocities in this guerilla warfare." For reasons easy to understand the reverend gentleman does not introduce the Kaiser's name into his booklet, but in the introduction he remarks: "Finally the refutation of such fairy-tales is a patriotic duty. Nothing is more essential for us Germans, especially in war time, than unity; but this harmony is necessarily endangered by religious bitterness and strife. Of a necessity it must cause deep pain and embitterment to our Catholic population when again and again ENTIRELY UNTRUE ACCUSATIONS are made against the priesthood of their Church."

The Rev. Duhr's exposure of what he calls "erlogener Schauergeschichten". ("lying horror tales") kills most of the "fairy-tales" accusing the Russians, French and Belgians of atrocities on German soldiers. A few illustrations will suffice to show the absence of all foundation for the charges against the Belgians; charges, we must remember, which the German soldiery believed, and which convinced them they were performing a holy task at Louvain, Tirlemont, Dinant, etc.

"On October 1st, 1914, a telegraphic agency (Wolff's ?) issued the following notice: 'A high Bavarian officer writing from the front has informed the *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung* of this incident. South of Cambrai a column of German motor-cars was attacked by a company of French cyclists. For the most part the guard was killed by rifle fire, while the cars were all burnt.

Later a German patrol discovered the remains, and on investigation, found that the dead Germans had all had their eyes gouged out.' "

The reverend Father comments as follows: "On following up this case, it was impossible to prove whether the patrol had seen rightly or whether they had really made the report at all. So much is certain, however, that in the matter of eyes being gouged out, an absolute mania of gruesomeness broke loose. An innumerable swarm of such horrible tales were told, passed on, and finally guaranteed as true—AND YET THEY WERE ALL FAIRY-TALES. A few cases will suffice.

"In September, 1914, the following paragraph appeared in the papers: 'Several ladies engaged in Red Cross work on Cologne Station were informed with every assurance of truth, that a hospital at Aix-la-Chapelle contained a whole ward full of wounded whose eyes had been gouged out on the battlefields of Belgium.'

"On September 26th the editor of the Catholic *Kölnische Volkszeitung* wrote to Dr. Kaufmann, a high Roman Catholic dignitary in Aix-la-Chapelle, begging him to ascertain whether the report were true. Two days later that gentleman replied: 'As regards the rumour mentioned in your letter, I beg to inform you that I at once put myself in communication with the authorities. I inquired of the doctor in charge of a hospital here (he is, by the way, a famous specialist for the eyes), and he assures me that in all the local

hospitals there is no ward for wounded whose eyes have been put out, AND SUCH A CASE HAS NEVER BEEN OBSERVED in the town, although the place is full of wounded.'

"A second report which the same journal exposed dates from October, 1914. Recently Dean A., who is the Superior in a military hospital in the Franciscan Nunnery at S., came to us and reported that a wounded soldier had told him that he had heard* that in the monastery Bl. by V., in Holland, there were twenty-two wounded German soldiers whose eyes had been gouged out by Belgians. The Dean begged us to write to the Mother Superior and ask for confirmation of the story. We did write, and the lady answered that there was no hospital at all in the cloister Bl."†

The same lie travelled to Bonn, Sigmaringen, Potsdam, Bremen, and was successively nailed down by the *Volkszeitung*. Inquiries were made in all directions wherever a case of gouged-out eyes was reported, the result being everywhere the same—a fairy-tale.

Yet when the German Imperial Chancellor received a party of American journalists (representatives of the United Press and the Associated Press) on September 2nd, 1914, he communicated this statement: "The English will inform your countrymen that German troops have burnt down

* The words "hear" and "heard" occur very frequently in these legends.—Author.

† The Rev. Duhr's book, pp. 11–12.

Belgian villages and towns, but they will conceal the fact that Belgian girls have gouged out the eyes of our helpless soldiers lying on the battle-fields."

"Berlin papers informed the public that 'a large number of Belgian civilians were prisoners in Münster. They are the same bestial creatures who shot from their houses on our unsuspecting troops, and who, before the arrival of our invading armies in Belgium, had perpetrated all sorts of cruelties on helpless German citizens. Indeed, when they were searched on their arrival at the prisoners' camp fingers with rings on them, which they had hacked off their victims, were found in their pockets. Justice will soon strike down these Belgians, among whom a very large number of priests are to be found. Twenty to thirty have already been condemned to death by a court-martial.'

"'The 'Pax' Society of Priests immediately wrote to the commander of the prisoners' camp, and received this reply: 'The ridiculous assertion of a Berlin paper that fingers had been found in the pockets of Belgian civilians in this camp is false. Neither has any priest or layman been condemned to death, but over one hundred Belgian women and children have been sent home again.' "*

The above extracts will suffice to show how these Roman Catholic gentlemen proceeded. Immedi-

* Ibid., p. 19.

ately an atrocity was reported they applied to the authorities, and in every case received an affirmation that the deed had never taken place. Among the monstrous lies exposed by these investigators, are reports that Belgian priests paid eight shillings for every German head brought to them; high treason charges against Catholic priests in Alsace; all kinds of monstrous crimes charged to the priesthood; that a Belgian boy was caught with a bucketful of dead Germans' eyes; espionage by priests etc., etc.

Yet one other case deserves quotation: "On October 5th, 1914, a priest was travelling by rail to Mayence. In the same compartment there were four privates from Infantry Regiment No. 94. One of them named Rössner, related the following story to his comrades, and then, at the priest's request, again repeated it:

"'In the Belgian village of Patsie the *curé* welcomed a German major and his orderly into his house. Afterwards the priest promised a boy of thirteen that he should go straight to heaven if he would murder the two Germans. The lad perpetrated the murder, after which he and the *curé* were shot under martial law.'

"When the priest pointed out how incredible the whole story was, the soldier swore to its truth, and became very impolite to his auditor. An inquiry was instituted and this was the result:

"'War Office, No. 1866. The investigations made, in especial the hearing under oath of private

Rössner and several officers in his regiment, have resulted in the following particulars being obtained: At the beginning of the campaign as the troops marched into a village—name unknown—they saw by the roadside two or three dead civilians. One was apparently a boy of about thirteen, while the other was an adult with a dark coat. It was not established whether this was the body of a priest. Furthermore, we have not been able to discover by whom, or for what reason, these people were shot.

"'At that time the story quoted by you about a *curé* and a boy, was told as a "rumour" to all the troops marching through. It is impossible after the lapse of time to test the truth of the narrative.

"'Signed by order,

"'BAUER AND WAGNER.'"*

The above document may be said, without presumption, to possess historic importance. It is a frank admission by the German War Office that Belgian civilians were actually shot down without rhyme or reason. Apparently German soldiers (!) had a *carte blanche* to shoot whom they liked, without rendering or being expected to render a report of their doings.

The Rev. Duhr writes: "The incredible speed with which these lying tales of horror spread on all sides must be classed as a morbid phenomenon, a sort of blood-cult. Their consequences could

* Ibid., pp. 54-5.

only be to act upon the national soul as a stimulant, inspiring fear and brutality."*

The author of this work is prepared to go much farther than the Rev. Father, and maintain that the foul, diseased imaginations which could invent such monstrous horrors are also capable of perpetrating them. They did not spring from the imagination of an Edgar Allan Poe, but arose in the minds of Germany's brutal peasantry and bloodthirsty working classes, who together every year commit in times of peace 9,000 acts of brutal, immoral bestiality, and maliciously wound 175,000 of their fellow German citizens.†

To-day Germany shouts in ecstasy that she is the chosen power of God; that her *Kultur* will regenerate the world. Let it first regenerate the "Augean Stable" known to the world as Germany. Without further comment readers are left to form their own opinion of a Press which breeds such filth, and the cultural level of a people which consumes such garbage. But the world owes a debt of gratitude to the Rev. Bernhard Duhr, S.J., and the "Pax" Society in Cologne.

The accusations of plundering on the part of German soldiers is naturally denied *in toto* by all parties in the Fatherland. Indeed, it has been discovered that the British army was guilty of wilful destruction in Belgium. A certain Major

* Ibid., p. 9.

† *Vide* Vol. 267 *Vierteljahrshefte*, published by the Berlin Government, 1914.

Krusemarck, commanding the 2nd battalion of the 12th Infantry Reserve Regiment, is responsible for the story. "On October 10th I entered Wilryk, near Antwerp, and took up my quarters in the Italian Consulate. All the houses had been deserted by the inhabitants. Immediately after entering the house I perceived that English soldiers had been here and behaved in a barbarous manner. Mirrors, valuable objects of art, etc., had been smashed in a way which betrayed purpose." The major's report continues: "The destruction which I have described had undoubtedly been perpetrated by members of the English army, and as proof of this I may state that in one of the rooms about a dozen visiting-cards were found with the name: Major E. L. Gerrard, Royal Marine Light Infantery (sic).

"During the subsequent pursuit of the Belgian and English armies we heard repeated complaints from the inhabitants that especially the English troops had acted in the most inconsiderate manner, purposely destroying furniture, etc., in civilian houses."*

Without doubt the story belongs to the group of legends exposed by the "Pax" Society, for which reason it is quoted here, as a fitting supplement to them. Yet it is psychologically interesting to note how difficult it is for Germans who burn, destroy and violate in their own country to believe that they behave otherwise than as lambs when playing the rôle of invaders.

* Richard Grasshoff: "Belgien's Schuld," p. 84.

One quotation from a large number will illustrate sufficiently the respect which the German troops felt for civilian homes in the territories occupied by them: "We got into the house by a back-door. Orders had been issued that only food and shirts were to be taken. The cellar was full of wine and champagne. A corporal brought us some of the latter. After half an hour the rooms looked very different; all the cupboards had been emptied in order to get at the jams and jellies. Several pots of fruit preserved in wine were divided as honestly as the greed of the individual allowed.

"All the underclothing was seized upon, obviously only the best being taken. Many a dirty Pole put on such a shirt as he had never dreamed of before. Even ladies' chemises were commandeered, and some of the men assured me that a French chemise is quite comfortable—in spite of the short sleeves.

"If there is a sterner sex in France, which is exceedingly doubtful, they do not seem to possess pants; so the men resorted to the corresponding article worn by ladies."* (This writer refers in other parts of his book to "mementoes" which he carried home to the Fatherland, after being wounded at the Marne.)

* H. Knutz: "Mit den Königin-Fusilieren durch Belgien," p. 42.

CHAPTER IX

THE NEUTRALITY OF BELGIUM AND GERMANY'S ANNEXATION PROPAGANDA

"AFTERTHOUGHTS" is the term which would perhaps designate most concisely the section of German war literature treating of Belgium's violated neutrality. Should that designation appear unfitting, then the author has only one other to suggest—"whitewash."

In order to apprehend clearly the method and aims concealed beneath the "afterthoughts," readers must bear in mind that every attempt to protest against the annexation of Belgium by Germany is prohibited by the German censor. The Social Democratic organs emphasize the fact almost daily that they are not permitted to print anything contrary to the principle of annexation.

On the other hand, numerous writers are allowed to make a most extensive propaganda by suggesting that annexation is necessary in the interests of their racial-brothers the Flemings. By order of the German Government a geographical description of the country has been published,* in which

* "Belgien, Land und Leute," Berlin, 1915.

every detail of Belgium's wealth in minerals, agriculture, and so on, is described, with no other possible purpose than the desire to whet German Michael's appetite.

All at once Germany has become suspiciously interested in Belgian history, in the domestic quarrels between Walloons and Flemings, in the alleged oppression of the latter (Low Germans) by the former, and propose for themselves the part of liberator and saviour for Flemish culture. They have discovered, among other things, that Belgium was merely a paper State, a diplomatic invention, an experiment, and that no "Belgian" people has ever existed, but rather two hostile elements were packed under the same roof against their will by the Conference of London—the said roof bears the name Belgium!

According to a good German-Swiss* the Belgians have no national feelings, no patriotism, and have never had a Fatherland. If a serious writer can make such statements after the Belgians have defended their native country so heroically, one naturally wonders whether Herr Blocher is sane, or merely a paid agent of the German authorities. In his work he denies every and any intention to justify or condemn either Germany or Belgium, and then proceeds to blacken the latter's character by quoting every Belgian utterance which may be interpreted as anti-German. These expressions lead him to the

* "Belgische Neutralität," by Eduard Blocher. Zurich, 1915.

remarkable conclusion that Belgians had already violated their own neutrality!

Blocher states that his work is only intended to prove that Switzerland has nothing to fear from Germany's precedent in invading Belgium. But he never mentions Belgium's maritime interests, Antwerp and the extensive seacoast on the North Sea. He is oblivious to the fact that Germany's desire to possess these was the sole motive for precipitating war and invading Belgium. To Germany the coast of Belgium is the door to the world and world domination. Switzerland does not possess such a door, and therefore had nothing to fear from her powerful neighbour; but if the Allies are unable to bar this door to Germany's aggressive schemes, then the time is not far distant when Germany would remember that she has "brothers" within Swiss frontiers and insist upon their entrance into the great Teutonic sheepfold—just as her most earnest desire at present is to drive the "lost" Flemings back to their parent race.

Among the many phrases which Germans have coined to describe Belgium the following occur: bastard, eunuch and hermaphrodite. According to the German conception of a "State," Belgium is an unnatural monstrosity, from which one draws the natural conclusion that Germany intends to remove it from the domain of earthly affairs.

On the whole, German writers admit the existence of Belgian neutrality, and also Germany's pledge to respect it. The three most serious

writers on the subject are, Dr. Reinhard Frank,* professor of jurisprudence in Munich University; Dr. Karl Hampe,† professor in Heidelberg; and Dr. Walter Schoenborn,‡ also a professor in Heidelberg University.

The nearer examination of these three works must be premised by two important considerations. Firstly, the three professors ignore the fact that Germany was a menace to Belgium, and make no mention of German aspirations for a coastline on or near the English Channel. Holland and Belgium form a twentieth century "Naboth's vineyard," on which the German Ahab has cast avaricious glances for upwards of forty years.

A casual acquaintance with Pan-German and German naval and military literature during the same period, affords overwhelming proof of this powerful current in German nationalism. If Naboth consulted strong neighbours as to necessary precautions against Ahab's plans for obtaining the vineyard, then Naboth acted as a wise man, and the only regret to-day is that the "strong neighbours" only offered Naboth assurances and words, instead of deeds. In other words Great Britain

* Reinhard Frank: "Die belgische Neutralität." Tübingen, 1915.

† Karl Hampe: "Belgien's Vergangenheit und Gegenwart." Berlin, 1915.

‡ Walther Schoenborn: "Die Neutralität Belgien's." This is an appendix to a large work written by twenty university professors, entitled "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," published by B. G. Teubner, Leipzig and Berlin, 1915.

did nothing because, as Lord Haldane expressed it, the Liberal Cabinet was "afraid" (!) to offend Germany and precipitate a crisis.

Secondly, the three professors, like all others of their class in the Fatherland, have sworn an oath on taking office not to do anything, either by word or deed, detrimental to the interests of the German State of which they are *official* members. An ordinary German in writing on Germany may be under the subjective influences of his national feelings, but a German who has taken the "Staatseid" (oath to the State) cannot be objective in national questions and interests—his oath leaves only one course open to him, and any departure from that course may mean the loss of his daily bread.

The author has the greatest respect for the achievements of German professors in the domains of science and abstract thought; by those achievements they have deservedly become famous, but in all judgments where Germany's interests are concerned they are bound hand and foot.*

* Towards the close of 1913 I had a conversation with half a dozen Germans (average age twenty-five) in Erlangen Gymnasium (State Secondary School); they were candidates in training for the teaching profession, all university men. I listened patiently to their diatribes concerning the perfidy of English Statesmen, and then pointed out, giving chapter and verse in German biographies, that Bismarck's record was exceedingly tortuous; the forgery of the Ems telegram was given as an instance.

A few weeks later I met the vice-principal of the school at a private party; thi. gentleman was a good friend of mine. He reminded me of the above conversation, and gave me a friendly warning never again to make such statements to my pupils. The candidates had talked it

When a German conscript enters the army he takes the *Fahneneid* (oath on, and to, the flag), which binds him to defend the Fatherland with bayonet and bullet. In like manner it may be said that German professors are bound by the *Staatseid* either to discreet silence, or to employ their intellectual pop-guns in defending Germany. That these pop-guns fire colossal untruths, innuendoes, word-twistings, and such like missiles, giving out gases calculated to stupefy and blind honest judgments, will become painfully evident in the course of our considerations.

That any and every German obeys the impulse to defend his country is just and praiseworthy; but in our search for truth we are compelled to note the fact that German professors are merely intellectual soldiers fighting for Germany. Without departing from the truth by one jot or tittle, readers may even call them "outside clerks" of the German Foreign Office, or the "ink-slingers" under the command of the German State.

over, and although they had provoked the discussion, proposed to have me reported to the Minister for Education for uttering such opinions. The vice-principal had intervened and prevented the *Denunziation*.

If a professor of history in a German university expressed any opinion in his academic lectures unfavourable to modern Germany, he would be immediately *denunziert* to the State authorities by his own students. Should he publish such opinions in book form, of course the process of cashiering him would be simpler. Germans do not desire the truth so far as their own country is concerned; they do not will the truth; they will *Deutschland über alles*, and all information, knowledge, or propaganda contrary to their will is prohibited. If space permitted I could mention numerous cases in which famous professors have been treated like schoolboys by the German State—their stern father and master.

These premises have been laid down *in extenso* because some fifty books will be discussed in this work, which emanate from German universities. A neutral reader may retort: You also are not impartial, for you are an Englishman! Having anticipated the question, the author ventures to give an answer. If he could make a destructive attack on Britain's policy—the attack would be made without the least hesitation. Such an attack, if proved to the hilt, would bring any man renown, and in the worst case no harm. But if a German professor launched an attack, based upon incontrovertible facts, against Bethmann-Hollweg and Germany's policy, that professor would be ruined in time of peace and in all probability imprisoned, or sent to penal servitude in time of war.

Nothing which the present author could write would ever tarnish the reputation of German professors as men of science, but in the narrower limits as historians of the Fatherland and propagandists of the *Deutschland-über-alles* gospel they are tied with fetters for the like of which we should seek in vain at the universities of Great Britain or America. It would be in the interests of truth and impartiality if every German professor who writes on the "Causes of the World War," "England's Conspiracy against Germany," "The Non-Existence of Belgian Neutrality," and similar themes, would print the German *Staatseid* on the front page of his book. The text of that oath would materially assist his readers in forming an opinion

regarding the trustworthiness and impartiality of the professor's conclusions.

Professor Frank commences his historical sketch of Belgian neutrality with the year 1632, when Cardinal Richelieu proposed that Belgium should be converted into an independent republic. Doubtless the desire to found a buffer State inspired Richelieu, just as it did the representatives of Prussia, Russia, France, Austria and England when they drew up the treaty guaranteeing Belgium's neutrality in perpetuity, at the Conference of London, 1839.

But an additional motive actuated the diplomatists of 1839, viz., Belgium was henceforth to be the corner-stone supporting the structure commonly designated "the balance of power in Europe."

An objection has been made to the validity of the treaty signed in London, viz., England herself did not consider it reliable and binding, or she would not have asked for, and obtained, pledges from both Prussia and France to respect Belgian neutrality in 1870. Another objection is the claim that the German Empire, founded in 1870, was not bound by the Prussian signature attached to a treaty in 1839. Other writers have endeavoured to show that the addition of African territory (Congo Free State) to Belgium changed the political status of that country, exposed it to colonial conflicts with two great colonial Powers, and thus tacitly ended the state of neutrality.

Each of the professors in question overrides these objections, and Frank remarks, p. 13: "Lawyers and diplomatists refuse, and rightly so, to accept this view." Again, p. 14: "There is no international document in existence which has cancelled Belgian neutrality."

Germany's alleged violation of her promise to regard Belgium as a neutral country is justified on quite other grounds. Belgium had herself violated her neutrality by a secret alliance with France and England. Frank argues that a neutral State has certain duties imposed upon it in peace time, and in support of his contention quotes Professor Arendt (Louvain University, 1845), who wrote: "A neutral State may not conclude an alliance of defence and offence, by which in case of war between two other States it is pledged to help one of them. Yet it is free and possesses the right to form alliances to protect its neutrality and in its own defence, but such defensive alliances can only be concluded after the outbreak of war."

Another authority quoted to support his point is Professor Hilty (University of Bern, 1889). "A neutral State may not conclude a treaty *in advance* to protect its own neutrality, because by this means a protectorate relationship would be created."

Frank continues (p. 21): "Hence Belgian neutrality was guaranteed in the interests of the balance of power in Europe, and I have already pointed out that the same idea prevailed when the barrier-systems of 1815 and 1818 were established.

"Considering the matter from this point of view, the falsity of modern Belgium's interpretation at once becomes apparent. According to Belgian official opinion her neutrality obligations only came into force in the event of war, and therefore could not be violated during peace. But this balance of power was to be maintained, above all in time of peace, and might not be disturbed by any peaceful negotiations whatever, especially if these were calculated to manifest themselves in either advantageous or prejudicial form, in the event of war.

"In this category we may place the surrender of territory. No impartial thinker can deny that the cession of Antwerp to England would have been a breach of neutrality on the part of Belgium, even if it had occurred in peace time. The same is true for the granting of occupation rights, and landing places for troops, or for the establishment of a harbour which might serve as a basis for the military or naval operations of another State.

"Moreover, it is unnecessary to exert one's imagination in order to discover 'peaceful negotiations' which are incompatible with permanent neutrality, for history offers us two exceedingly instructive examples. When a tariff union between France and Belgium was proposed in 1840, England objected because the plan was not in accord with Belgian neutrality. Again in 1868, when the Eastern Railway Company of France sought to obtain railway concessions in Belgium, it was the latter country which refused its consent, and in the

subsequent parliamentary debate the step was designated an act of neutrality."

From this extract it is evident that Professor Frank has undermined his own case. Belgian neutrality was intended by the great powers to be the corner-stone of the European balance of power. During the last forty years Germany's carefully meditated increase of armaments on land and sea threatened to dislodge the corner-stone. When the Conference of London declared Belgium to be a permanently neutral country, there was apparent equality of power on each side of the stone. In 1870 the Franco-German war showed that the balance of power was already disturbed at this corner of the European edifice. Still Germany's pledged word was considered sufficient guarantee of the *status quo*.

Since 1870 the potential energy on the German side of the corner-stone has increased in an unprecedented degree, and this huge energy has been consistently converted into concrete military and naval forces. This alteration in the potential *status quo ante* has been partly the result of natural growth, but in a still greater degree, to Germany's doctrine that it is only might which counts.

Another German professor* had defined the posi-

* Hermann Oncken (Heidelberg), in the *Quarterly Review*, October, 1913. The author of the article charges Great Britain with screwing down the valves, which is a deliberate distortion of the truth. Britain has always opened her markets free to German goods and admitted the same privileges to her rival—so far as these did not run contrary to established rights—in all parts of the world. With regard to territorial

tion in a sentence: "Germany is a boiler charged to danger-point with potential energy. In such a case is it a sound policy to try to avert the possibility of an explosion by screwing down all its safety-valves?" Recognizing that Belgian neutrality has existed for many years past solely on Germany's good-will, it became the right and urgent duty of the other signatory powers to endeavour to strengthen the corner-stone. Germany absolutely refused to relax in any way the pressure which her "potential energy" was exercising at this point, therefore it was necessary above all for France and Great Britain to bolster up the threatened corner.

The former Power could have achieved this purpose by building a chain of huge fortresses along her Belgian frontier. Why this precautionary measure was never taken is difficult to surmise, but had it been taken, Germany would have ascribed to her neighbour plans of aggression—and declared war.

Great Britain could have restored the balance by creating an army of several millions. Lord Haldane has announced that the late Liberal Government was "afraid" to do this, although the fear of losing office may have been greater than their fear for Germany.

expansion a treaty had been drawn up between the two Powers and was ready to be signed just when war broke out. That treaty would have afforded Germany immense opportunities for expansion, but not at the expense of Europe. Germany, however, desired European expansion, and according to her accepted teaching, the fate of extra-European territories will be decided on the battlefields of Europe.

The measures which England did take were merely non-binding conversations with the military authorities of France and Belgium; the making of plans for putting a British garrison of defence on Belgian territory in the event of the latter's neutrality being violated or threatened; and the printing of books describing the means of communication in Belgium.*

As a result of these measures, Belgium stands charged by Germany with having broken her own neutrality, and German writers are naïvely asking why Belgium did not give the same confidence to Germany which she gave to England. The German mind knows quite well, that in building strategic railways to the Belgian frontier she betrayed the line of direction which the potential energy was intended to take, when the burst came. Unofficially Germany has long since proclaimed her intention to invade Belgium; it was an "open secret."

The *dénouement* of August 4th, 1914, when Bel-

* "Belgium, Road and River Reports," prepared by the General Staff, Vol. I., 1912; II., 1913; III. & IV., 1914. Copies of this work have been seized by the Germans in Belgium, and capital is being made of the incident to prove a violation of Belgian neutrality. If the British General Staff had nothing better to do than to compile guide-books to Belgium for a non-existent British army, it appears merely amusing. But if the late Liberal Government believed that Germany's potential energy could be prevented from breaking through into Belgian territory by a barricade of guide-books—it was a lamentable error of judgment. On the whole we are forced to call it a tragical irony, that the only defences which Belgium possessed against the *furor teutonicus*—excepting the Belgian army—were a "scrap of paper" and a barricade of the same material.

gian neutrality was declared a "scrap of paper,"* was not the inspiration of a moment, nor a decision arrived at under the pressure of necessity, but the result of years of military preparation and planning. It had been carefully arranged that the boiler should pour forth its energy through the Belgian valve.

Or to draw another comparison, it is a modern variety of the wolf and the lamb fable, with this difference: the wolf has first of all swallowed the lamb, and now excuses himself by asserting that the traitorous wretch had muddied the stream.

Belgians were painfully aware of the danger threatening them, and would have made greater efforts to protect themselves, had not their own Social Democrats resisted every military proposal. As the matter stands to-day, however, all the efforts which Belgium did make, are classed by Germany as intrigues of the Triple Entente, threatening her (Germany's) existence, and all the horrors which have fallen upon this gallant "neutral" country the German Pecksniff designates "Belgium's Atonement."† It is to be feared that sooner or later, unless Germany's military pride and unbounded

* This famous phrase was employed as far back as 1855 by a Belgian Minister in the House of Deputies, Brussels. M. Lebeau in pleading for greater military preparation used these words: "History has shown what becomes of neutralities which were guaranteed, by what may be termed a "scrap of paper."

† *Belgien's Sühne*, the title of a chapter describing the desolation and havoc of war, in a book entitled "Mit dem Hauptquartier nach Westen," by Heinrich Binder. Berlin, 1915.

greed of her neighbour's goods can be checked, German professors will be engaged in the scientific task of proving that the waters of the upper Rhine are unpalatable because the lamb residing in Holland has stirred up mud in the lower reaches of the same river!

Belgium knew that England and France had no other interest than the maintenance of her neutrality. Belgium saw and felt, where the storm clouds lowered, and probably sought or accepted advice from those Powers who wished to perpetuate both the territorial integrity and neutrality of Belgium. Germany's afterthought on the point is: "It was Belgium's duty to protect her neutrality, and she owed this duty to all States alike in the interests of the balance of power—a conception to which she owes her existence.

"She was bound to treat all the signatory Powers in the same manner, but she failed to do so, in that she permitted one or two of them to gain an insight into her system of defence. By this means she afforded the States admitted to her confidence, certain advantages which they could employ for their own ends at any moment.

"By allowing certain of the great Powers to see her cards, Belgium was not supporting the European balance, but seriously disturbing it. Even Belgium's Legation Secretary in Berlin had warned his Government concerning the political dangers arising out of intimacy with England. By revealing her system of defence to England, Belgium destroyed

its intrinsic value and still more—she violated her international obligations."*

Considering that the British army at that time was small, that Britain had no idea of annexing Belgian territory, one naturally wonders how the value of Belgium's defence system had been depreciated by conversations with British officers. In effect, Germany maintains that Belgium should have behaved as a nonentity, which is contrary to all reason.

The Berlin Government has always treated her small neighbour as a sovereign State, equal in quality, though not in power, to any State in the world. If Germany recognized Belgium's sovereignty, why should not England do the same, and, above all, why had Belgium no right to think of her self-preservation, when she knew the danger on her eastern frontier grew more menacing month by month ?

Frank concludes his dissertation with his opinion of England and quotes Thucydides, V., 105, as the best applicable characterization of the British with which he is acquainted. " Among themselves, indeed, and out of respect for their traditional constitution, they prove to be quite decent. As regards their treatment of foreigners, a great deal might be said, yet we will try to express it in brief. Among all whom we know they are the most brazen in declaring what is good to be agreeable, and what is profitable to be just."

* Professor Frank's work, pp. 29–30.

The very offence which Germany accuses England of having premeditated, she committed herself many years before. When France seemed to threaten Belgium's existence, King Leopold I. concluded a secret treaty* with the king of Prussia, whereby the latter was empowered to enter Belgium and occupy fortresses in case of France becoming dangerous. The French danger passed away, and its place was taken by a more awful menace—the pressure of German potential energy; and when Belgium in turn opened her heart (this is the unproved accusation which Germany makes to-day—Author) to England, then she has violated her neutrality and undermined the balance of power.† There is even a suspicion that Leopold II. renewed this treaty with Germany in 1890, in spite of the fact that the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Prince de Chimay, in an official speech denied its existence.

Professor Schoenborn's essay on Belgian neutrality is the least satisfactory exposition of the three professorial effusions; it is no credit to a man of learning, and is merely the work of an incapable partisan trying to make a bad cause into a good one. Schoenborn commences‡ with the customary

* Germans love anything which is "secret." "Geheimniskrämerei" ("affectation of mysteriousness and secrecy") is a national and individual characteristic of the German people.—Author.

† Karl Hampe: "Belgiens Vergangenheit und Gegenwart" ("Belgium Past and Present"), p. 49.

‡ "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg" ("Germany and the World War"), pp. 566–8.

German tactics by stating that Bethmann-Hollweg's " scrap-of-paper " speech, and von Jagow's (German Secretary of State) explanations to the Belgian representative in Berlin on August 3rd, 1914, are of no importance in deciding the justice of Germany's violation of her pledged word. One is led to inquire, When is a German utterance—whether given in the Reichstag by the Chancellor or on paper in the form of a treaty—final and binding ?

Subterfuges, insinuations, distortions, even brazen falsehoods, are scattered throughout German war literature, thicker " than Autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa's brook." It is to be feared that just as Germans have lied for a century to prove that the English were annihilated at the battle of Waterloo, and for over forty years to show that Bismarck was not a forger, so they will lie for centuries to come in order to prove that the invasion of Belgium was not what Bethmann-Hollweg called it, a " breach of international law."

Like his *confrères*, Herr Schoenborn admits that Germany was pledged to respect the neutrality of Belgium, but the said neutrality was non-existent, which appears somewhat paradoxical. Yet this is not the least logical part of his case. " The passage of German troops through Belgium was indispensable in the interests of the preservation of the German Empire. A successful resistance to the annihilation-plans which our enemies had wrought for our downfall seemed possible only by this

means. The Government regretted that, by so doing, we should commit a formal infringement of the rights of a third State (Belgium), and promised to make all possible compensation for the transgression.

"The judicial point of view which influenced the decision of the German Government is perhaps, best illustrated by a parallel taken from the ordinary laws of the country: A forester (gamekeeper) is attacked by a poacher, and in that same moment perceives a second poacher bearing a gun at full-cock, creeping into a strange house in order to obtain a better shot at the forester. Just as he is about to enter the house the forester breaks the door open and thus forestalls him—in order to surprise and overcome him. The forester is justified in taking this step, but must make good all damage resulting to the householder."*

The instance holds good in the land of *Kultur*, where law and order affords so little protection to a civilian and his property; but in countries where laws are based upon culture the author believes that the forester would receive condign punishment for breaking into another man's house, no matter under what pretext. Unconsciously the learned professor is humorous when he compares Germany to a gamekeeper and Russia and France to poachers; but he is naïve to a degree of stupidity, when he makes France carry a weapon fully prepared to shoot the forester.

* Ibid., p. 575.

We will consult another German authority to show that France's weapons were not at full-cock.

"During the last ten years France has given special attention to the fortresses on the German frontier. But those facing Belgium have been so carelessly equipped that we see clearly to what a degree she relied upon her neighbour. The forts are in the same condition as they were twenty or thirty years ago. As some of these fortifications were built fifty years ago, various points on the frontier are strategically, absolutely useless.

"A typical example of this, is Fort les Ayvelles, which is intended to protect the bridges and Meuse crossings south of Mézières-Charleville; the fort was levelled to the ground by 300 shots from our 21-centimetre howitzers. It was built in 1878 and armed with forty cannon; of these the principal weapons consisted of two batteries each containing six 9-centimetre cannon, which, however, were cast in the years 1878-1880, and in the best case could only carry 4,000 yards. Then there were some 12-centimetre bronze pieces cast in 1884, and a few five-barrelled revolver cannon.

"Besides these there were old howitzers from the year 1842; muzzle-loaders with the characteristic pyramids of cannon ball by the side, such as are often used in Germany at village festivals or to fire a salute. The fort itself was a perfect picture of the obsolete and out-of-date. Apart from the

crude, primitive equipment, the organization must have been faulty indeed.

"On the road leading up to the fort we saw some tree-branches which had been hurriedly placed as obstacles, and higher up wire entanglements had been commenced at the last moment. At least one battery was useless, for the field of fire was cut off by high trees, and at the last minute the garrison had tried to place the guns in a better position.

"Our artillery which fired from a north-westerly position displayed a precision of aim which is rare. One battery had had nearly every gun put out of action by clean hits. In several cases we saw the barrel of the gun yards away from its carriage, and only a heap of wheels, earth, stones, etc., marked the place where it had stood.

"Another proof of the excellent work done by the artillery, was the fact that hardly a shell had struck the earth in the 500 yards from the battery to the fort. After the former had been disposed of, the artillery fire was concentrated on the fort, which was reduced to a heap of rubbish. The stonework and the high walls—yards thick—had tumbled to pieces like a child's box of bricks.

"A garrison of 900 men had been placed in this useless cage, and they had fled almost at the first shot. Instead of putting these men in trenches, their superiors had put them at this 'lost post' and allowed them to suffer the moral effects of a complete, inevitable defeat.

"Near the fort I saw the grave of its commander, the unfortunate man who had witnessed the hopeless struggle. He lived to see his men save their lives in wild flight—and then ended his own."*

Here we have a sorry picture of the poacher whom Germany feared so much. The world knows now that neither Britain, France nor Russia were prepared for war, which excludes the probability that they desired or provoked a conflict. But Germany knew that, and much more, in the month of July, 1914. Bethmann-Hollweg when addressing the Reichstag drew a terrifying picture of French armies† standing ready to invade Belgium, but he knew full well that the necessary base-fortresses were lacking on the Franco-Belgian frontier.

As regards the alleged plans which Germany's enemies had made to annihilate Germany, it will be necessary for Professor Schoenborn to prove that the Entente Powers had: (1.) Caused the murder in Serajewo; (2.) Despatched the ultimatum to Serbia; (3.) Prepared themselves for war. Until he proves these three points the world

* Heinrich Binder: "Mit dem Hauptquartier nach Westen," pp. 107–9.

† Richard Grasshoff in his work "Belgien's Schuld" ("Belgium's Guilt"), p. 14 *et seq.*, reproduces several confessions alleged to have been made by French soldiers, prisoners of war in Germany, stating that they entered Belgian territory on July 31st, 1914. At present it is impossible to test the value of this evidence. Cf. p. 151.

will continue to believe that it was Germany alone who cherished " annihilation-plans."

Schoenborn mentions too, Britain's refusal to promise her neutrality even if Germany respected the neutrality of Belgium. This offer was made to Sir Edward Grey, who declined it. According to Professor Schoenborn Germany's final decision to invade Belgium was only taken after that refusal. It is a striking example of the immorality which prevails both in Germany's business and political life. She gave her solemn pledge in 1839, yet endeavoured to sell the same pledge in 1914—for Britain's neutrality !

The author once made an agreement with a German, but soon found that the arrangement was ignored and wrote to the person in question : " You have employed our arrangement merely as a means for making further incursions into my rights."

That summarizes the Teutonic conception of a treaty, either private or national. It is only a wedge with which to broaden the way for a further advance. Usually a man signs an agreement with an idea of finality, and looks forward to freedom from further worry in the matter. Not so the German ; with him it is an instrument to obtain, or blackmail, further concessions ; and as individuals, instead of occupying their thoughts and energies in the faithful fulfilment of its terms, they plot and plan in the pursuit of ulterior advantages.

Heidelberg's great scholar seems to have had doubts concerning his simile of the gamekeeper; hence in his last footnote he makes the innocuous remark: "Because the house-breaking gamekeeper fired the first shot, it is not usual to draw the conclusion that the poacher had only defensive intentions" (p. 590).

All in all, Professor Schoenborn's attempt at partisanship is a miserable failure, and as an academic thesis it is doubtful whether the faculty of law in any German university would grant a student a degree for such a crude effort.

Various facts indicate Germany's intention to annex Belgium, if not the entire country, then those districts in which Flemish is spoken. Germany has suddenly remembered that the Flemings are a Low German people and that they have been "oppressed" by the Walloons. The hypocrisy of the plea becomes evident when we recall German (including Austrian) oppression of the Poles, Slavs and Hungarians.

One writer* has even endeavoured to prove that the House of Hesse has a legitimate historical claim to the province of Brabant. But as the following extracts will show, there is method in this madness. No pains are being spared to stir up racial feeling between the two peoples (Flemings and Walloons) who form King Albert's subjects. All the internal differences are being dished up

* Dr. Karl Knetsch: "Des Hauses Hessen Ansprüche auf Brabant" ("The House of Hesse's Claims to Brabant"). Marburg, 1915.

to convince the inhabitants of Flanders that they will be much better off under the German heel.*

Forgetting their tyrannous efforts to stamp out the Polish language and Polish national feelings, the Germans are now sorrowing over the alleged attempts of the Walloons to suffocate the Flemish dialect. German war books breathe hate and contempt for the Walloons, but bestow clumsy bear-like caresses (no doubt unwelcome to their recipients) on the Flemings.

In a work† already cited the following passages occur, in addition to three whole chapters intended to supply historical proof that Flanders is by the very nature of things a part of the German Empire.

"The German people committed a grave crime, when they fought among themselves and left their race-brothers on the frontier, defenceless and at the mercy of a foreign Power. Therefore we have no right to scold these brothers (the Flemings), but should rather fetch them back into the German fold" (p. 40).

* The *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten* for September 19th, 1915, contains a long account of a petition which was presented to Herr von Bissing, General Governor of Belgium, by a branch of the General Union of the Netherlands. The branch society is in Lierre (a town occupied by the Germans), and the petition is a statement of Flemish national and language aspirations. Unfortunately the document in question "makes a bitter attack on Franco-Belgian endeavours to rob the Flemings of their rights." It is superfluous to quote more; this sentence alone shows the origin of the petition to be German.

† Wilhelm Kotzde: "Von Lüttich bis Flandern" ("From Liége nto Flanders"). Weimar, 1914.

Kotzde reports a conversation which he had with an educated Fleming last autumn. "'We do not like the French and English,' said the Fleming. 'But what about Brussels?' I remarked. 'They are a people for themselves. The Flemish capital is Antwerp' he answered.

"Our paths led in different directions, but we parted with the consciousness that we are tribal brothers. So much seems certain, that when the Flemings are freed from the embittering influence of the Walloons and French, then this Low German tribe will again learn to love everything German—because they are German. Furthermore, that will make an end of the French language in Flemish districts" (p. 84).

"German infantry marched with us into Antwerp. How deeply it touched me to hear them sing the 'Wacht am Rhein' and then 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles,' in the very city which was to serve as an English base for operations against our dear Fatherland. And my Flemish companion softly hummed this splendid German song of faith.

"In that moment a spasm of pain went through my heart, that the Flemings should have to fight against us in this great struggle for the existence of Germany: these, our lost brothers, of whom so many yearn to be with us again" (p. 86).

"With the fall of Antwerp, Flanders—the land of the German Hanse period, of Ghent, Ypres and Bruges—became German once more" (p. 147).

Kotzde concludes his work as follows :—

"Holland was compelled to bow before the might of France and consent to Belgium becoming an independent State. From that moment the Flemings, cut off in every way from their German brothers, were delivered up to the Walloons, behind whom stood the French.

"The Germans at that time lacked a Bismarck to unite them and interest them in the fate of their outlying brother tribe. This war has freed our hands, which hitherto had been bound by the dictates of conscience. Of himself the German would never have kindled this world conflagration, but others have hurled the torch into our abode—and our hands are free!

"We do not yet know what Belgium's fate will be, but we can be perfectly sure that the Flemings will never again be left to the mercy of the Walloons and French. They have had a wild and chequered history; and although they have often shown signs of barbarism in the fight, they have not waged this war with the devilish cruelty of the Walloons.

"They lack the discipline which alone a well-ordered State can bestow. The training and education of the German military system and German administration, will be a blessing to them. Even to-day many Flemings bless the hour of their return into the German paternal home" (p. 190).

"In a struggle which has lasted for nearly a century, the Flemings have displayed their unconquerable will to maintain their national

peculiarities. Without outside aid, and with little or no deterioration, they have maintained their nationalism. Now the horrors of war have swept over the lands of the Flemings and Walloons. The Belgian army, consisting of 65 per cent. Flemings, has been decimated by German arms. North and south of the Meuse a wicked harvest of hate has sprung up. But the most remarkable point is that this hate is not directed against the Germans alone; the mutual dislike of Flemings and Walloons has turned into hatred. The Walloons cherish bitter suspicions of the Flemings; they scent the racial German, and are promising that after the war they will wage a life and death feud against the German part of the Flemish nature."*

The same writer claims that the Germans had conquered Antwerp before its fall, by peaceful penetration. "In 1880 the British share of Antwerp's trade was 56 per cent., Germany's 9 per cent.; in 1900, British 48 per cent., German 23½ per cent. Not only had the British flag been beaten in percentages but also in absolute figures; in the year 1912–1913 German trade to Antwerp increased by 400,000 tons, while that of Great Britain decreased by 200,000 tons. The commercial future of Antwerp will be German!"†

"To-day Antwerp is the second largest port

* Ulrich Rauscher: "Belgien heute und morgen" ("Belgium to-day and to-morrow"). Leipzig, 1915; p. 35.

† Ibid., p. 64.

on the Continent, with over 400,000 inhabitants, and now Germany's war banner waves above its cathedral. Germany's maritime flag has waved during the last twenty years above Antwerp's commercial progress. Antwerp's progress was German progress."*

After which follows a glowing account of Belgium's mineral wealth. "It is Belgium's mission to be a gigantic factory for the rest of the world," and of course this mission will be directed by—Germany!

"Those who had warned us for years past that England is our greatest enemy were right. To-day every German recognizes who is our principal opponent in this world war. Against Russia and France we fight, as the poet expresses it, 'with steel and bronze, and conclude a peace some time or other.' But against England we wage war with the greatest bitterness and such an awful rage, as only an entire and great people in their holy wrath can feel. The words of Lissauer's 'Hymn of Hate' were spoken out of the innermost depths of every German soul.

"When Hindenburg announces a new victory we are happy; when our front in the Argonne advances we are satisfied; when our faithful Landsturm beats back a French attack in the Vosges, it awakes a pleasurable pride in our breasts. But when progress is announced in Flanders, when a single square yard of earth is captured by our

* Ibid., p. 68.

brave troops in the Ypres district, then all Germany is beside herself with pure joy. The seventy millions know only too well, that everything depends upon the development of events in Flanders, as to when and how, we shall force England to her knees.

"Hence of all the fields of war, Belgium is the most familiar to us, and we love best of all to hear news from that quarter. May God grant that in the peace negotiations we shall hear much more and good tidings about Flanders."*

Dr. Mittelmann's book is a prose-poem in praise of Germany's ineffable greatness. He sees in the present war, "a holy struggle for Germany's might and future," and like all his compatriots, makes no mention of Austria. If the Central Powers should be victorious, there is no doubt that Germany would seize the booty. In justifying the destruction of churches, cathedrals, etc., Herr Mittelmann asserts that "one single German soldier is of more worth than all the art treasures of our enemies" (p. 12).

His book deserves to be read by all Britishers who imagine that we can win Germany's love and respect—by weakness and compromise. "In this war Germans and English soldiers are opposed to each other for the first time. All the scorn and

* Dr. Fritz Mittelmann: "Kreuz und Quer durch Belgien" ("Round and about Belgium"). Stettin, 1915; p. 8. Dr. Mittelmann is a personal friend of the Liberal leader, Herr Bassermann, who accompanied him on some of his journeys.

hate which had accumulated for years past in the German nation has now broken loose with volcanic force. Whoever assumes that the English were ever other than what they are—is wrong. They have never had ideals, and seek singly and alone their own profit. Whenever they have fought side by side with another nation against a common foe, they have done their best to weaken their ally and reap all the glory and advantage for themselves."*

Pity for the Belgians suffering through Germany's brutal war of aggression does not appear to be one of Dr. Mittelmann's weaknesses. "The principal industrial occupation of the inhabitants seems at present to be begging. In spite of their hostile glances the crowd did not hesitate to gather round as we entered our car, and quite a hundred greedy hands were stretched towards us for alms. But in Liége, without the shadow of a doubt the best of all was the magnificent Burgundy which we drank there; perhaps we had never relished wine so much in our lives."† One wonders whether these pioneers of *Kultur* relished the wine so much because they knew themselves to be surrounded by thousands of hungry, "greedy" Belgians.

On page 93, Mittelmann relates at length his genuine Prussian joy at humiliating a Belgian policeman before the latter's compatriots. None enjoy having their boots licked, so much as those who are accustomed to perform that service for others.

* Ibid., p. 29. † Ibid., p. 44.

Our author pays the customary compliments to the Flemings. It must be remembered that the above incident took place in Liége among the Walloons, but it would seem that the Germans try to behave with decency when among their Low German brothers.

"One feels at home in the house of a Flemish peasant; the racial relationship tends to homeliness. The painful cleanliness of the whitewashed cottages makes a pleasant contrast to the homes of the Walloons. War and politics are never mentioned, as these delicate subjects would prevent a friendly understanding."*

"A dream. An old German dream. A land full of quaintness which the rush of modern life has left untouched. On all sides cleanliness and order which makes the heart beat gladly. And this joyful impression is doubly strong when one comes direct from the dirty, disorderly villages of the Walloons.

"Just as a mother may give birth to two children with entirely different natures, so Belgium affords hearth and home to two peoples in whose language, culture and customs there is neither similarity nor harmony. The Flemings are absolutely German, and in this war they treat us with friendly confidence. Their eyes do not glitter with fanatical hate like those of the Walloons."†

* Ibid., p. 90.

† Heinrich Binder: "Mit dem Hauptquartier nach Westen," p. 102.

Herr Binder's meditations on the slaughter in the valley of the Meuse are not without interest. "A vale which has been won by German blood! In recent days the waters of the Meuse have often flowed blood-red. Many a warrior has sunk into these depths. Longing and hope rise in our hearts: May destiny determine that all these dead, after a triumphant war, shall sleep at rest in a German valley!"*

* Ibid., p. 122.

CHAPTER X

SAIGNER À BLANC.*

IT would be superfluous to review here the history of Franco-German relations during the last half century; other writers have already performed the task. Yet the whole trend of development in the relations between the two powerful neighbours may be defined by two watchwords: *saigner à blanc* in Germany, and the *revanche idée* in France. But there is this difference: the former has become ever more and more, and the latter less and less, a factor in European politics.

While the German nation has been gradually and systematically leavened with the teaching that might alone is right, the French revenge party has been weakened year by year by national prosperity, colonial expansion and the growth of a powerful anti-military party. Whatever may be said of French chauvinists, this much remains an

* "To bleed white." Bismarck employed this phrase on two occasions in addressing the Reichstag; his purpose could have been no other than to bully France.—Author.

immovable fact—the party was incapable of providing adequate national defences against the Germanic neighbour, while plans of reconquest can only be assigned to the domain of myths.

On every occasion that the *revanche* cry has been resuscitated, the direct cause is to be sought in Germany. Having displaced France in 1870 from her position of the first military power in Europe, Germany has endeavoured by fair and foul means to prevent her neighbour from again raising her head, and that policy alone is to blame for the suspicion and hatred which have marked Franco-German relations during the whole period and plunged Europe into an era of armaments, ending in a world war. England and Russia prevented Bismarck from annihilating France in 1875, an incident which aroused justified fear throughout France and gave an impulse to the revenge party.

In 1881 the Iron Chancellor told the French Ambassador: "Outside Europe you can do what you like." Bismarck's intention was to divert reviving French energies to colonial work, and if possible involve her in conflicts with the other colonizing Powers. In both of these plans he succeeded, but the common sense and loyalty of Great Britain and Italy prevented the conflicts from assuming a dangerous form—war—as desired by the Government in Berlin.

As soon as the latter perceived that French genius and persistency were bearing fruit in a

magnificent colonial empire, the innate jealousy and greed of the German nation led to a policy of colonial pinpricks on the part of the Kaiser's Government. This seems the most probable explanation of Germany's attitude during the last decade before 1914. The natural consequence was that those powers which had most to fear through German ill-will were welded together more firmly in a policy of self-protection.

Germany cannot, or will not, recognize that the causes of the above-mentioned development are to be found solely and alone in her own actions. On the contrary, she designates the " consequences " a world-wide conspiracy against German interests. In naval affairs she adopts the same naïve line of argument. First and foremost Germany committed herself to a policy of unlimited—even provocative—naval expansion. When the Power most concerned—Great Britain—took precautionary measures to guarantee British interests in view of Germany's " peaceful " development, then the latter Power declared the consequences of her own actions to be a hostile initiative directed against her.

A defence of this kind may be convincing for those who observe events in the German perspective, but it will be unable to withstand impartial historical criticism. Boxers expect a rebound when they " punch the ball," but none of them would be so foolish as to deny having delivered a blow when the rebound takes place.

Yet that is the unscientific defence which Germany has adopted in her endeavours to explain away her aggressive attitude to Belgium, France, and Great Britain.

In a word, the principles underlying *saigner à blanc* have grown during the past four decades into a possible avalanche possessing huge potential energy; the momentum was given to it in August, 1914.

If it were necessary, a picture of German popular opinion might be projected, showing how that opinion was influenced and formed during the critical days at the close of July last year. But from considerations of space only the outlines of the picture can be given. Before the war German newspapers abounded in reports of French unpreparedness and chaos. The German public was informed that France dreaded and feared war with Germany.

"Without any exaggeration it may be said that a state of nerves has seized the French nation, such as we should seek for in vain at the time of Tangiers and Agadir. There is tremendous excitement, which in many reports suggests absolute panic."*

The Paris correspondent of the *Kölnische Zeitung* (August 4th) on returning to Cologne wrote: "Conditions in France afford a striking picture of bad organization. War rage possesses the people; but such an enthusiasm as I found in Germany on my return is unknown to them."

* *Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten*, August 1st.

On the same day the *Hamburger Nachrichten* reported: "A German refugee who has returned from the French capital says that there is no enthusiasm in Paris. Men and women may be seen weeping in the streets, while the crowds are shouting: 'Down with war!' 'We desire no war!'"

Probably there is no better way to incite a ferocious bully than to tell him that his opponent is weak, unprepared and afraid. Almost simultaneously false reports of French troops crossing the frontier and of French airmen dropping bombs on Nuremberg were spread by the Berlin General Staff, and thus an excuse found for a declaration of war on France.

From the French point of view events appeared quite different. "This morning German troops have violated French territory at three different points: in the direction of Longwy by Lunéville, at Cirey and by Belfort. War has thus been declared, and the endeavours for peace as described in the President's proclamation have been in vain. For the last eight days Herr von Schoen (German Ambassador in Paris) has lulled us to sleep with endearing protestations of peace. Meanwhile Germany has mobilized troops in a secret and malevolent manner.

"The war upon which we must enter is for civilization against barbarism. All Frenchmen must be united not merely by the feeling of duty, but also in hatred for an enemy who seeks no

other goal than our annihilation—the destruction of a nation which has always been a pioneer of justice and liberty in the world.

"To-night our five covering-corps will take up their positions and face the enemy till our plan of concentration is completed. Russia is with us.

"MESSIMY,
"Minister for War."

From the moment that Germany declared war on France, new tactics were adopted in the Press. A campaign of calumny began which is the exact counterpart of that against Belgium and the Belgians. Uncorroborated tales of Germans having been ill treated in all parts of France were spread broadcast. According to one journal* sixty to eighty Germans had been murdered on the platforms of the Gare de l'Est in Paris.

Still there is one accusation which even German newspapers have never dared to make, viz., that Frenchmen murdered and ill-treated Frenchmen, or that war delirium led them to destroy property on a wholesale scale. On the other hand, the picture obtainable of Germany during August, 1914, proves that similar peaceful conditions did not prevail in the great nation of "drill and discipline."

France was even "convicted" of having caused the war; instead of being unprepared, she had laid the fuse and was the guilty power in causing the European explosion. "The German Govern-

* *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, August 5th.

ment has now obtained absolute proof that France has been standing at arms, ready to fall upon Germany, for many weeks past."*

Above all, President Poincaré has been marked down in Germany's senseless, unnecessary hunt for a scapegoat upon whom to fix her own guilt. Even in the year 1915 there is a section of the German public† which believes that the French President—a native of Lorraine—has worked for years past in building up a *revanche* conspiracy ending in the European war.

Germany despised France and has tried in vain to patronize her. For many years past the average German has held that the French are a nation of "degenerate weaklings." Inspired by these sentiments, with a mixture of hate, the German troops invaded France, and it is a promising symptom that during twelve months of war respect for French valour has taken the place of contempt.

The first engagements are described in the official telegrams from the German army headquarters. "August 11th. Enemies' troops, apparently the 7th French army corps and an infantry division from the Belfort garrison, were driven out of a fortified position by Mülhausen. Our losses were inconsiderable, those of the French heavy.

"August 12th. Our troops attacked a French

* *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, August 13th.

† Dr. Max Beer: "Tzar Poincarew, die Schuld am Kriege" ("Czar Poincarew, the War-guilty"). Berlin, 1915.

brigade by Lagarde. The enemy suffered heavy losses and was thrown back into the Paroy forest. We captured a flag, two batteries, four machine guns and about seven hundred prisoners. A French general was among the killed.

"August 18th. The fight by Mülhausen was little more than a skirmish. One and a half enemy corps had invaded Upper Alsace before our troops could be collected and placed on a war-footing. In spite of their numerical inferiority they attacked the enemy without hesitation and hurled him back in the direction of Belfort.

"Meanwhile an artillery contingent from Strasbourg has suffered a check. Two battalions with cannon and machine guns advanced from Shirmeck on the 14th. They were attacked by hostile artillery fire while passing through a narrow pass. The cannon, etc., were badly damaged and therefore left. No doubt they were captured by the enemy.

"The incident is of no importance and will have no influence on our operations, but it should serve as a warning to our soldiers against overconfidence and carelessness. The men mustered again and reached the fortress in safety: they had lost their guns but not their courage. Whether treachery on the part of the inhabitants had any part in the affair has not yet been ascertained.

"August 22nd. Our troops are in pursuit of the French army defeated between Metz and the Vosges. The enemies' retreat became a flight. Up till now more than ten thousand prisoners

have been taken and at least fifty cannon captured. The French had eight army corps in the field.

" August 24th. Yesterday the German Crown Prince, advancing on both sides of Longwy, achieved a victory over the opposing forces and hurled them back.

" The troops under the leadership of the Bavarian Crown Prince have also been victorious and crossed the line Lunéville-Blamont-Tirey. To-day the 21st army corps occupied Lunéville.

" The pursuit has brought rich booty. Besides numerous prisoners and standards the left wing of the Vosges army has already captured 150 cannon.

" To-day the German Crown Prince's army has continued the pursuit beyond Longwy.

" The army under Duke Albrecht of Württemberg has advanced on both sides of Neufchâteau and completely defeated the French army which had crossed the Semois. Numerous cannon, standards and prisoners—among the latter several generals—were captured.

" West of the Meuse our troops are advancing on Maubeuge. An English cavalry brigade which appeared on their front was defeated.

" August 27th. Nine days after the conclusion of our concentration the armies in the West have gained victory after victory and penetrated the enemy's territory from Cambrai to the Southern Vosges. At all points the enemy has been driven out of his positions and is now in full retreat.

" It is not yet possible to estimate, even approximately, his losses in killed, prisoners and booty; the explanation for this is the enormous extent of the battlefields, broken by thick forests and mountainous country.

" General von Kluck's army defeated the English at Maubeuge and to-day has attacked them in an encircling move south-west of that place.

" After several days' fighting about eight army corps of French and Belgian troops between the Sambre, Namur and the Meuse were completely defeated by the German armies under Generals von Bülow and von Hausen.

" Namur has fallen after two days' cannonade. The attack on Maubeuge has commenced. Duke Albrecht's army pursued the defeated enemy over the Semois and has now crossed the Meuse.

" On the other side of Longwy the German Crown Prince has captured a fortified enemy position, and thrown back a heavy attack from the direction of Verdun. His army is advancing towards the Meuse. Longwy has fallen.

" New hostile forces from Nancy attacked the Bavarian Crown Prince's army during its pursuit of the French army before it. The attack failed.

" General von Heeringen's army is pursuing the enemy in the Vosges, and driving him southwards. Alsace has been cleared of enemy forces.

" Up till the present the lines of communication have been guarded by the various armies; now

the troops left behind for that purpose are urgently required for our further advance. Hence His Majesty has ordered the mobilization of the Landsturm.

" The Landsturm will be employed in protecting the lines of communication and for the occupation of Belgium. This land which now comes under German administration will be utilized for supplying all kinds of necessities for our armies, in order that Germany may be spared as much as possible."

During the first month of hostilities on the Western front, the Germans claimed that their captures amounted to 233 pieces of heavy artillery, 116 field guns, 79 machine guns, 166 wagons and 12,934 prisoners. On September 8th General Quartermaster von Stein announced : " Maubeuge capitulated yesterday ; 40,000 prisoners of war, including four generals, 400 cannon and immense quantities of war materials fell into our hands."

A German war correspondent, who was present at the fall of Maubeuge, wrote :* " The march out of the prisoners began on the same day at 2.30 p.m. and lasted over six hours. They were conducted to trains and despatched to Germany. Some of the infantry made a good impression, while the pioneers and artillery can only be classed as passable.

" To the great disappointment of our troops there were only a hundred and twenty English among the prisoners who had been cut off from

* Heinrich Binder : " Mit dem Hauptquartier nach Westen," p. 96.

the main army; young fellows about eighteen to twenty years of age. When marching out these English youths were so stupid as to offer the hand to their German victors in token of the gentleman-like manner in which they accepted defeat. In accordance with Albion's ancient boxing custom, they desired to show the absence of any bitter feeling by a handshake; just as one does after a football match.

"Our men returned a few cuffs for this war-like behaviour, whereupon the English—richer in experience—drew back astonished at German unfriendliness."

Germany's rush for Paris reached as far as the Marne; they claim that patrols penetrated to within seven kilometres of the French capital. The report announcing the turn of the tide is worthy of quotation.

"Chief Headquarters, September 10th. Our army in their pursuit of the enemy in the direction east of Paris had passed beyond the Marne. There they were attacked by superior forces between Meaux and Montmirail. In two days' heavy fighting they have kept the enemy back and even made progress.

"When the approach of new, stronger hostile forces was announced our wing was withdrawn; the enemy made no attempt at pursuit. Up till now the booty captured in this battle includes fifty cannon and some thousands of prisoners.

"West of Verdun the army is engaged in an

advancing battle. In Lorraine and the Vosges district the situation is unchanged."

This seems to be all that the German nation has heard from official sources of the German defeat on the Marne and the hurried retreat to the Aisne. Almost every report issued by the German headquarters during the succeeding three weeks informed the world that a "decision had not yet fallen."

Evidently the nation awaited and hoped for a decision which would leave Paris at the mercy of the invading army. They are still awaiting that decision, but whether the waiting is seasoned by hope cannot easily be determined.

A soldier present at the battle of the Marne has chronicled his experiences.* "We passed over long, undulating hills and valleys, and towards 1 p.m. obtained our first glimpse down the beautiful vale of the Marne. Standing on the heights of Château Thierry, we beheld the town nestling on both sides of the river in the valley below.

"Then we entered the town and saw on all sides the tokens of street fighting. All the windows were smashed by shell fire; some houses had been entirely gutted. Dead Frenchmen lay around in heaps, some corpses so mutilated by shrapnel as to appear hardly human. With a shudder we turned our eyes from this horrible scene.

"Crossing the Marne by a sand-stone bridge,

* H. Knutz: "Mit den Königin-Fusilieren durch Belgien und Frankreich," p. 49 *et seq.*

we climbed the opposing heights under a burning sun. At the top we deployed, but for that day our artillery sufficed to drive the enemy in headlong flight to the south; the night we spent under the open sky.

"Sunday, September 6th. Before breakfast we intended to bathe in a stream, when our dreams of a rest-day were dispelled by an order to hold ourselves ready for the march. 'The 17th division is under heavy rifle fire and the 18th must advance to their support.' Meanwhile, the chicken soup was almost ready, but the order 'form ranks' resounded, and with empty stomachs we marched through Neuvy up a hill and dug ourselves in behind a wood.

"The thunder of the enemies' artillery is terrible; shrapnel is bursting on our left. Captain von Liliencron discusses the situation with the major and then turns to us. 'Our regiment attacks! go for the dogs, children!' he exclaims with gleaming eyes.

"Next we advance round the wood and lie down behind a hedge; axes are held in readiness to hack a way through the latter. Five steps from me a machine gun hammers away at full speed; it is now impossible to hear commands, so they are roared from man to man—it could not be termed shouting. 'Ambulance to the right!' somebody is severely wounded, but the ambulance men have more than they can do on the left.

"The hell-music is at its loudest; shrapnel is bursting in the wood behind us; suddenly there is an awful explosion half a dozen yards away; I hear the screams of my comrades, then we rush forwards. The rush across the field was awful—flank fire from the right. Here and there a comrade bites the grass.

"At last I throw myself down, but there is no cover; the wounded crouch there too. None of my company are there; it seems that the two last shells have played havoc with them. The enemies' (French) main position is nearly a mile away in a forest.

"Up the next slope our dead lie thick around, and here too a deadly bullet had found the breast of our heroic captain. But in the strip of forest French and Turko bodies are still thicker. The cat-like Turkos have climbed into the trees and are shot down like crows. A maddening infantry and artillery fire greets us as we reach the top. Every ten to twenty yards shells strike, and shrapnel bursts, filling the air with earth, dust, smoke and smell.

"Forward! till almost exhausted I throw myself down again; a hundred to a hundred and fifty Fusiliers form a firing-line. Columns of infantry pour a murderous fire on to us from the forest. It cannot go on thus; one after the other is wounded or killed. We have advanced nearly eight hundred yards over open ground. On the right there is a small thicket of reeds. Some of

the company have already sought shelter there, and I make a rush there with the same hope.

"'For heaven's sake, lie down, corporal,' screamed a man as I came up. In fact, the reeds afford no cover whatever. Wounded and dead lie there and bullets keep hitting them. In front of me lay a man from the fourth company; a bullet had entered his chest and passed out of his back; the blood was oozing out of a wound about the size of a shilling. The horror was too much for me, and I crept to the other end of the strip.

"There I found everything far worse, but I cannot describe the terrors which I saw. One poor fellow begs for a drop of water; there is just another draught in my bottle. With grateful eyes he hands it back to me, and in the same moment I feel a stinging pain in the shoulder. My arm is numbed and helpless; hardly one of us who is not wounded.

"We can offer no resistance to the enemy; but the awful way back! At last the run back over eight hundred yards of open field begins. Now and again a comrade sinks to the ground, never to rise again. My breath is nearly gone; one last effort, and in truth I have escaped from the hail of bullets."

It is remarkable and noteworthy that German writers charge the French armies with looting and destruction in their own country. Probably this is merely a device to get rid of unpleasant

accusations raised against the German army. Furthermore, the most reckless charges of uncleanliness are made. In commenting on the lot of the Landsturm troops quartered in the villages of Northern France, one author* writes: "The Landsturm men pass their time as best they can in these holes, whose most conspicuous quality is their filth."

The same author gives his impressions of a visit to Sedan. "Only one house has been completely and another partly destroyed, otherwise appearances are peaceful, and as far as possible, life goes on as usual. Here, too, many of the inhabitants have left their homes and fled. The stupidity of this flight becomes evident at every step. In numerous small hotels whose proprietors have remained, one sees German soldiers buying bottles of splendid Burgundy wine at a shilling a bottle.

"But in another hotel whose proprietor had fled, is it a matter for surprise that the men caroused on discovering a cellar containing three thousand bottles of wine? On the route I have myself purchased some of the oldest and best wines from our men at a price of three cigars a bottle, and the recollection of them belongs to the pleasantest memories of my sojourn at the front.

"Certainly the owner of Château Frenois, situated a few minutes' walk from the town, will be more unpleasantly surprised on his return

* Erich Köhrer: "Zwischen Aisne und Argonnen" ("Between the Aisne and the Argonnes"), p. 25.

than the hotel proprietor. In his home, French marauders and plunderers have destroyed and devastated the entire contents. It is impossible to comprehend the senselessness of this conduct, for which no reasons of military necessity can be advanced.

"Ancient family pictures which could not be taken out of their frames have been ruined by bayonet stabs, and from the shape of the cuts they were certainly the work of French bayonets. Even the library, which contained a valuable collection of old prints, had been robbed.

"Not far from this scene of desolation stands Château Bellevue, where King William met Napoleon in 1870. There, too, the traces of French plunderers are painfully evident; it was left to the 'Hun-Kaiser' to save this historic spot from complete annihilation. In September Wilhelm II. visited the château and seeing the signs of rapacity, ordered the place to be strictly guarded to prevent further desecration."*

It did not occur to Herr Köhrer to connect the carousals with the plundering; in one sentence he admits that French soldiers respected the wine-cellars and in the next accuses them of stealing books, etc. Every German writer, in describing the German advance, comments on the immense number of haversacks, weapons and equipment thrown away by the French in their "wild flight." Yet they desire their readers to believe

* Ibid., pp. 22–3.

that the same soldiers had time to rob and destroy, indeed, carry their plunder with them!

Since September no French troops have been in the district, yet the Kaiser found it necessary to place guards round Château Bellevue. Is it not more reasonable to assume that the precaution was taken against the predatory instincts of his own soldiery, who, admittedly, are in occupation of the province?

Herr Köhrer finds it almost beneath his dignity to reply to charges of barbarism and Hunnism; yet he devotes several pages to the art of white-washing. "The inhabitants who remained in their homes, and those who have returned since the flight—unfortunately it is only a small part of the entirety—have recognized long ago that the German soldier is not a barbarian. The terrible distress which prevails among the French is often enough relieved by the generosity of the German troops. Throngs of women and children from the filthy villages of the Argonne and the Ardennes gather round our field-kitchens and regularly receive the remains of the meals; while many a German Landsturm man, recollecting his own wife and children, fills the mouths of dirty French children instead of completely satisfying his own hunger."*

No one disputes the presence of kindly Germans

* Ibid., p. 34. Herr Köhrer has evidently never visited many Bavarian villages; otherwise he would be more careful with his adjectives when describing the villages of France.—Author.

in the Kaiser's armies, and it is pleasing to read about these acts of generosity in relieving distress which is entirely the result of Germany's guilt. But the point which all German writers miss is the explanation of positive evidence of brutal deeds. Their kindly incidents and proofs of German chivalry are all of a negative character, and do not overthrow one jot or tittle of the opposing positive evidence.

Iron crosses have fallen in thick showers on the German armies; during the month of July, 1915, no fewer than 3,400 of these decorations were awarded to the Bavarian army alone. Still, as far back as November of last year, Herr Köhrer wrote: "In the villages on the slopes of the Argonnes and on the banks of the Aisne, nearly every second soldier is wearing an iron cross. One has the certain conviction that it is not an army of fifty or sixty thousand, but a nation of heroes which occupies the plains of France and fights for us.

"They are all heroes at the front, including those who do not wear the outward symbol of personal bravery. When we see how our men live, it would seem that the earliest days of the human race have returned. They have become cave-dwellers, troglodytes in the worst form. Our heavy batteries are placed on the slopes of the Argonne forest, while the light field-howitzers occupy the summits.

"Near them holes have been dug in the wet

clay or chalk, and meagrely lined with straw; these dark, damp caves are the dwellings of our officers and men for weeks at a time, while the shells from the enemy's artillery whiz and burst around. In them the differences of rank disappear, except that one sometimes sees a couple of chairs provided for officers. When duty does not call them to the guns, they are free to remain in the open exposed to a sudden and awful death, or to spend their time in the womb of mother earth. Yet one never hears a word of complaint; rather the hardships of this strange existence are borne with rough good-humour."*

Contrary to the expectations of other nations, the war seems only to have increased the popularity of the military Moloch. Writers who look upon the Allies as deliverers who will free Germany from the degrading slavery imposed upon that country, will be disappointed to learn that Germans worship the *bunte Rock* (gay uniform) more than ever.

At a meeting of the National Liberal leaders held in Dortmund, July, 1915, a resolution was passed calling upon the Government to pursue a still greater naval and army programme. Both the Liberals and Conservatives have adopted the motto: *Deutsche Machtpolitik frei von Sentimentalität* (A German policy of might free from sentimentalism).

"This war of the nations, which has overthrown

* Ibid., p. 28.

so many accepted standards and created new ones, will also give a new basis to the privileged position of German officers in public life. Millions of German men have seen how in this war the German lieutenant has again merited his special position for some generations to come. I wish to emphasize this point over and over again.

"During the first two months of hostilities nearly forty thousand iron crosses were awarded. To many of those at home this appeared to be overdoing it, like the many exaggerations in the domain of orders and honours with which we have become familiar during the last decade.* As a matter of fact, the number of crosses given was too small.

"Not forty thousand heroes are at the front, but a nation of heroes. In emphasizing why the work of our officers is so splendid I must lay down these premises. The bravery and joyous spirit of self-sacrifice in our men is above all praise, but the officers have higher and more responsible duties. They have not only to set an example of physical courage, but they must possess the mental capacity to lead and spur on their men—and that under conditions so hard and rude that the man at home has no conception of them.

"I have been in the trenches on the slopes of the Argonnes, where officers lie side by side with the men in clay and chalk, unwashed and filthy cut off from the outside world, exposed to con-

* *Vide* "The Soul of Germany," Chapter XIII.

tinuous fire and thrown entirely upon themselves. I have seen them in the artillery positions on the Aisne, in the mud-caves of the heavy batteries, where they sit in the dark on empty packing-cases, listening to the music of exploding shells and whistling bullets. And everywhere I received the same impression: the men are enthusiastic in praise of their leaders.

"Many a one who has never voted for any other party than the Social Democrats has exclaimed: 'Lieutenants! *Donnerwetter*, yes! Hats off to them!' For the lieutenant is not only the first in the fight, but he is the soul of the company; untiring in his efforts to keep up their spirits in the intervals between the fighting.

"And when we again witness the scenes which often disgusted us before the war—the monocled young gentlemen in gay uniform, walking through the streets, nose in the air—when we see all this again, and perhaps a bit of iron pinned on the breast, then we must remember that for their life of danger and hardship in Argonnes clay, and Russian mud, no earthly compensation can be too great.

"No nation can ever imitate our lieutenant, and in this war of masses and technical perfection it is still the value of individual personality which will decide the issue. We may affirm that this value stands very high in our army—both as regards officers and men.

"Only he who has seen for himself the burnt

villages, devastated towns and desolate land of France can comprehend the full meaning of the awful word *Krieg* (war). Mere words cannot express what it means to Germans and Germany that the horrors of war have been carried almost alone into the enemy's territory.

"But then a spirit of irresistible ardour goes through the ranks of our warriors. From every eye, in every word, burns the deepest, most unbounded faith in victory. In the trenches, batteries and hospitals there is no doubt, no fear. One great thought hovers victoriously above all hardships, distress and suffering: Germany to the front in the world!

"And from out the blood which flows—and that is shed plenteously, very plenteously—(this is the sacred faith which I brought back from the battlefields) out of this blood the proud harvest will grow, whose blessings we shall all feel—the world dominion of the German idea!"*

In spite of Köhrer's assurances that the relationship between officers and men in the German army is an ideal one, there is evidence that such is not always the case. The Social Democratic paper *Karlsruhe Volksfreund* (July 23rd, 1915) contained a long article by "comrade" Wilhelm Kolb, attacking the anti-annexation fraction of his party. Kolb accused the opposition with "speculating on the question of food-prices and the ill-treatment of soldiers at and behind the front. The power of

* Ibid., p. 50 *et seq.*

the censor makes it exceedingly difficult, or even impossible, to ventilate this matter."

German writers are careful to impress their readers that the losses of the French were appalling, but here and there a stray word or sentence lifts the veil and discovers their own.

"Just before me are the graves of some German officers adorned with wooden crosses and helmets, and a little farther on a *Massengrab* (large common grave) containing several hundred German soldiers. At this point (Sedan) the battle raged with awful fury, and the Germans had to make heavy sacrifices. It seems almost incredible that the Germans could have forced the position.

"The country is hilly; not a tree or bush offered cover from the French bullets. French trenches at distances of from thirty to fifty yards, stretched across the land, and between them were wire entanglements and other obstacles. Besides which they had an open firing-range of over a mile in extent, with their artillery to cover them from a steep hill on the other side of the Meuse.

"At 5 a.m. the attack commenced, and by the afternoon the French had been hurled across the river. Then came the most difficult part of the operations. From the Meuse the ground rises gradually to a steep hill, on which the French artillery and machine guns were placed. The only bridge over the river, at Donchery, had been blown up at the last moment by the enemy, and although our pioneers had hastily constructed a bridge of

tree-trunks—what was this for so many regiments!

"Many tried to ford or swim the stream. The French fire was murderous in its effect. Several times the ranks wavered, but again and again they pressed forward, till the heights were stormed and the enemy in flight. The battle raged on into the night and then the remains of the regiments gathered at the foot of the hill. They had won a costly but glorious victory. Those who have seen the successes which our troops have gained, even under the most difficult conditions, need have no fear as to the ultimate result of this war.

"I stood long at this spot on the blood-drenched soil of France, just where the regiments from Trier* had fought so bravely and suffered so heavily. Serious thoughts arose in me as I gazed at the battlefield. What a dispensation! Two gigantic battles on the same spot in such a short space of time; two great victories over the French. And most remarkable of all, the nation which for forty-four years had desired *revanche* for Sedan, was again completely defeated at the same place—almost on the anniversary of the first battle.

"Twilight shadows fall deep upon the quiet fields where the dead rest. Squadrons of white clouds drift down the valley, as if to cover the sleeping heroes with a shroud of white. Above

* The writer, Dr. W. Kriege, is a Roman Catholic priest from Trier (Trèves). His book "Bilder vom Kriegsschauplatz" (Pictures from the Seat of War"), published in 1915, is both interesting and illuminating.

Sedan's heights appears the shining crescent of the moon and sheds a ghostly light over the wide field of death—the battlefield of Sedan."*

"At last we arrive at our destination—Somme-Py. But what a sight! Nothing remains of the once beautiful, spacious village but a heap of rubbish. A few black-burnt walls are still standing and abou three houses; among them, fortunately, the house occupied by Kaiser Wilhelm I. in 1870–71, when the victorious German army was marching on Paris. At present it serves as a field-hospital. Yes, this is the second time that a German army has marched this way; but the battles were never so bloody as this time.

"Somme-Py and the country round has a special meaning for us folk in Trier. For here our Trier regiments—above all the 29th and 69th—have fought with splendid valour, and here they have buried many a dear friend and comrade. Immediately before Somme-Py one of the largest mass-graves of the whole campaign may be seen.

"A simple iron railing surrounds the spot where hundreds of those rest who lived so happily in our midst, who marched so gaily and to whom we waved farewell greetings as they tramped through our streets.

"The fight for the village had been particularly fierce and bloody; the inhabitants had no time to flee. Half-burnt men and animals, soldiers and civilians, filled the houses and streets, or lay buried under the ruins—awful sacrifices to the war Fury!

* Dr. W. Kriege: "Bilder vom Kriegsschauplatz," p. 45 *et seq.*

We must thank God and our brave soldiers that they have preserved our hearths and homes from such horror and misery."*

It is cheering to find a growing feeling of respect for the French in German war literature. One of many such expressions will be sufficient to quote here. The writer of it is a German author who enjoys much esteem in his own country, and was a guest at the German Crown Prince's headquarters in May, 1915.

"In conversations with numerous French prisoners I have found no traces of hate and rage either in their looks or words. The most are glad to have escaped in an honourable manner from the nerve-racking, trench warfare. In an honourable manner? Yes, for I have heard on all sides—from the highest officers and the simplest soldiers—that the French have fought well. For the most part they are well led—and always filled up with lies."†

"Then we dined with the Crown Prince; soup, roast goose, fresh beans and dessert. The conversation was lively. In our small company—although the bravery of the enemy and his excellent leadership receives full recognition—there is not one who does not reckon with absolute conviction on complete victory on both fronts."‡

* Ibid., pp. 78–80.

† Rudolf Presber: "An die Front zum deutschen Kronprinzen" ("At the Front with the German Crown Prince"), p. 33.

‡ Ibid., p. 61.

Herr Presber's book is free, neither from adulation nor hero-worship. He is a poet, sentimentalist, and evangelist for Greater Germany. His book is a collection of incidents, reflections, and conversations, carefully assorted and arranged, so as to allow the limelight to glare on the statuesque figure of a mighty Germanic hero, fresh from Walhalla—incarnated in the Crown Prince.

The Crown Prince's birthday dinner-party affords an excellent opportunity for the German nation to see the mighty one replying to the toast of his health. Presber affirms that the moment when his royal host raised his glass and uttered the words: "Ein stilles Glas den Toten!" ("A glass in silence to the memory of the fallen") will for ever be "most solemn and sacred" in his memory.

With genuine German inquisitiveness Herr Presber hunted through the various cupboards and drawers in his room and found a map of France as it was before the loss of Alsace-Lorraine. "The map is wrong and useless, and so I use it to line a drawer before placing my linen therein. This makes me think of the many changes which will be marked in the atlases which German children are now carrying to school in their satchels—after the cannon have ceased to roar. How the colouring of the maps has changed since I went to school, and yet once more a great 'unrest of colour' is about to change the map of Europe. And as far as I can see, large notes of interrogation must be

placed not alone round the Poles and in Central Africa!"*

"I spoke of the good understanding between the natives and our soldiers. Probably that is not so easy to attain everywhere. We drove long distances from the Prince's headquarters and once passed through a famous town which sees the German conquerors for a second time. (No doubt Sedan is meant.—Author.)

"Most of the inhabitants know it is the Crown Prince by the signs of reverence shown him on all sides, by officers and men alike. But the citizens of the twice-conquered town bite their lips, turn their heads aside, and pretend indifference. The women too—many of them in deep mourning—turn away, or sometimes stand and stare as if with suddenly aroused interest. Here the ancient hate glowers in silence.

"It seems as if a parole of mute non-respect has been passed round. This town, which has become world-famous on account of the *débâcle* of the Third Empire, lives to see with gnashing of teeth the downfall of the Republic. But they do not believe it yet."†

"French and Russian prisoners are working on the roads, wheeling barrows of stone and filling the holes made by shell fire. Some of them, without thinking, touch their caps when their guards stand stiffly at the salute. (And how few guards are necessary to watch this tame herd!) Others gaze

* Ibid., p. 101. † Ibid., p. 108.

at our car as it rushes past without giving any salute ; their faces express astonishment, curiosity, but no excitement."*

Another illuminating page tells of the Crown Prince's anger on hearing that Italy had joined the Allies, and how they went for a motor-ride as an antidote to the royal rage.

German humour is generally unconscious and mostly unintentional. After a policy of bullying towards France for forty-four years, Germany has discovered during the course of the war that France is the cat's-paw of Russia and Great Britain —principally the latter.

One writer,† in some fifty pages of venom, endeavours to show that England is France's executioner. Another‡ gives our ally the advice " awake ! " After Germany has played the *saigner-à-blanc* game in Northern France for more than a year, the advice seems rather belated.

Herr Heinemann writes, p. 33 : " France is not fighting for herself, but for England and Russia.

" Poor deceived France ! She has given fifteen milliards of francs to Russia so that she may at last draw the sword in defence of Russo-Serbian and British commercial interests. She has placed her money and her beautiful land at the disposal

* Ibid., pp. 107–110.

† Walter Unus : " England als Henker Frankreichs." Braunschweig, 1915.

‡ Ernst Heinemann : " Frankreich, erwache ! " Berlin, 1915.

of her so-called friends—for the sake of a mad idea which these friends have cleverly exploited (*revanche idée*).

"England has declared that she will continue the war for twenty years, twenty years—on French soil. If under these circumstances the French broke with their allies—who have exploited France for the last twenty-five years, and who have plunged her into this war—in order to arrive at a reasonable understanding with Germany; then they would only show that they do not intend to accept the final consequences of the mistakes committed by the French Government.

"No one is compelled to eat the last drop of a soup prepared by false friends. In this sense, to seduce France to a direct breach of faith with her allies, would in truth, only mean the protection of France's best interests" (pp. 51–2).

One other writer deserves mention—a lecturer in history, Bonn University—because he presents an opinion the exact contrary to the one last quoted. According to Dr. Platzhoff, France herself is the guilty party, who has tricked Russia and Great Britain into the service of revenge for 1870.

"Therefore France found it necessary to extract herself from isolation, and acquire allies against her neighbour (Germany). In several decades of painful effort, French diplomacy has solved the problem in brilliant fashion. *Revanche*—and alliance policy are inseparable conceptions."*

* Dr. Walter Platzhoff: "Deutschland und Frankreich," p. 18.

In contrast to most German authors, Platzhoff admits that the *Entente Cordiale* was called into being by Germany herself. "This development caused great anxiety in Germany. But it seems certain that Germany could have prevented it by one means alone—an open agreement with England. And Berlin, after considering the matter carefully, had declined the latter."*

"That France would enter the field on Russia's behalf is a logical consequence not only of the Dual Alliance treaty, but also of the policy pursued during recent decades. In vain French ministers have protested their love of peace and their innocence in causing this war. The policy of alliances and revenge was certain to end in a world conflagration.

"Already voices make themselves heard which prophesy a revolution in French policy and a later *entente* with Germany."†

Many such passages might be cited to prove that Germany would like to see a split among the allies. But France's honour and welfare are in her own hands, and it appears a futile hope that Germany, after failing to bring France to submission and self-effacement by threats of *saigner à blanc*, will succeed in her purpose by the reality.

* Ibid., p. 22.

† Ibid., pp. 26–8.

CHAPTER XI

THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE WAR

MENTION has already been made that a large number of Germany's war books has emanated from the universities. Not the least important of these efforts is "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg" ("Germany and the World War.")* Twenty well-known university professors have contributed to the work; the fact being emphasized that special facilities have been accorded to them by the German foreign office. For British readers the chapters by Professors Marcks and Oncken are the most interesting, viz., "England's Policy of Might" by the former, and "Events leading up to the War" and "The Outbreak of War" by the latter. They take up a fifth of the 686 pages of which the entire work consists.

The purpose of Professor Marcks' essay is to prove on historical and scientific lines the lessons

* "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," herausgegeben von Otto Hintze, Friedrich Meinecke, Hermann Oncken und Hermann Schumacher. Leipzig und Berlin, 1915.

which have been taught in German schools for nearly half a century, i.e., England is an astute but ruthless robber who respects no right, and no nation which stands in her way.

"England's modern history begins with the Tudors and her world policy with Elizabeth. First of all, England had to liberate herself, economically and politically, from a position of dependence on the other Powers; then she took up her particular attitude to the world. Her separation from the Roman Catholic Church was exceedingly rich in consequences; this step assigned to her a peculiar place in the camp of the nations, and exercised a deep influence upon her intellectual development. It gave her an impetus towards internal and external independence.

"But the determining factor for England's future was her insular position; this has been the case from the time Europe entered the ocean-period. Since the year 1600 England, by her commerce and politics, has influenced Europe from without, while she has maintained for herself a position of independence, and directed her energies across the ocean into the wide world. Successively she seized upon the Baltic, North Sea, and Atlantic Ocean; gradually she became the merchant and shipbuilder for most of the European nations.

"The sea has given her everything—independence, security and prosperity—both in treasure

and lands. The sea protected her and spared her the unpleasantness of mighty neighbours. It was the ocean which permitted free development to her internal life, parliament, government and administration, and saved her from the continental form of Government—a strong, armed monarchy.

"The sea has allowed the English to develop, undisturbed, the peculiarities of their race—personal energy, trained by contact with the ocean; personal freedom, favoured but not oppressed by the living organism of the State. The sea afforded them liberty of action in every direction without fear of attack from behind. Freed from the chains which bound Europe, England went out into the wide world.

"Yet she remained constantly associated with the continent, not only because Europe was her field of action. English statesmen have always seized upon every opportunity to influence European policy; at first this was from motives of defence, but afterwards from an ever-increasing spirit of aggression. The balance of power on the continent has always been one of the premises for England's security and existence.

"She is indebted to her insular position for the supreme advantage of being able to exercise her influence in Europe without allowing her forces to be tied to the continent; European countries were bound by their own conflicts and differences, enabling England to exert her influence upon

them without active participation. England has become thoroughly accustomed to a state of affairs under which she has no neighbours and never permits any—not even on the sea. She has come to consider this her God-given prerogative.

"The barriers of geographical position which hampered other lands, nature did not impose upon England; the security afforded by her girdle of waves seemed as it were to impel her to strike out into the unbounded, and to look upon every obstacle as a wrong. There is a thread of daring lawlessness running through all England's world-struggles, through all periods of her history, right down to the present day.

"When England speaks of humanity she means herself; her cosmopolitan utterances refer to her own nationality. She forgets too easily that other nations have arisen on the earth who esteem their own distinguishing traits and are inspired by the ardent desire to uphold their own institutions, forms of Government and culture. England believes all too easily that the world's map should be all one colour. But the soul of the modern world demands variety."*

There is no important objection to raise against Professor Marcks' statement of English history and Britain's favoured position on the surface of the globe. Germany did not choose her own geographical situation in the world—it is hers

* Ibid., 297 *et seq.*

by nature and the right of historical succession. Britain has never envied her or endeavoured to deprive her of the advantages consequent upon her "place in the sun."

Neither did the British select their island home; destiny and history were again the determining factors. But it would be a travesty of the truth to assert that Germany has not envied her that position, together with the advantages arising from it. Yet in the same degree as the inhabitants of these islands have used the "talents" entrusted to them through their favourable position, Germany's jealousy seems to have become more bitterly angry. By right of birth and national necessity Germany demands the domination of the Rhine, but she fails to recognize that right of birth and the demands of national existence compel Britain to claim the domination of the seas.

The remainder of Professor Marcks' essay is devoted to proving that "the freedon of our world requires that it shall not be so in future." Whatever motives actuated Germany in precipitating the war, this much is now evident—it is her supreme desire and the aim of her highest endeavour to destroy Britain's favoured situation and every advantage accruing to her from it.

To-day the issue is clear and simple for Germany—the annihilation of British power and influence in the world. Literally hundreds of German war books echo that cry, and, above all else, it is the hope of attaining this aim which

has aroused the bitterest war fury in the entire German nation—man, woman and child. Reduced to first principles, this difference of geographical position and the varying advantages arising therefrom are the prime causes—if not *the* cause—of the present world-struggle.

It was solely the fear of perpetuating British supremacy* which has led Germany consistently to reject the extended hand of friendship. Standing side by side with Great Britain, either in friendship or alliance, Germany would have given her approval to Britain's historical position in the world. When this country departed from the policy of "splendid isolation" repeated attempts were made to establish more intimate relations with Germany (1898–1902).

But as Professor Marcks (p. 315) observes: "Germany refused the hand extended to her."

* Graf Ernst zu Reventlow: "Der Vampir des Festlandes ("England, the Vampire of the Continent"). Berlin, 1915, p. 117. "England's withdrawal from the policy which sought to establish a mutual plan of procedure in world politics between Germany and Britain dates from the time when Britain recognized that Germany would not allow herself to be employed against Russia. In Germany to-day, voices may be heard proclaiming that von Bülow chose wrongly in refusing England's offer, especially as Russia has repaid our loyalty and friendship with iniquitous ingratitude. The latter represents the truth.

"But in judging the policy of that period two factors must be borne in mind. The acceptance of Great Britain's offer would have placed a tie upon the German Empire which would have been unendurable. Germany would have become the strong but stupid Power, whose duty would have been to fight British battles on the continent. Besides which the choice concerned Germany's world future, above all the development of the German war fleet."

Count Reventlow and a host of other writers have chronicled the fact too, yet on September 2nd, 1914, the German Chancellor dared to say to representative American journalists: "When the archives are opened then the world will learn how often Germany has offered the hand of friendship to England."

It is only one more confirmation that the "law of necessity" is incompatible with the truth. The truth is that Germany preferred to drive Britain into another and hostile camp rather than have her friendship. Germany preferred British hostility rather than relinquish her plans for unlimited naval expansion—which she believed to be the only means of destroying Britain's position, and with that resolution already taken the Kaiser presented his photograph to a distinguished Englishman with this significant remark written on it with his own hand: "I bide my time!"

Although Britain drew the sword to defend Belgium, the supreme issue—and the only one which occupies the German mind to-day—is whether this country shall continue to hold the position allotted to her by destiny and confirmed by history, or whether she is to be supplanted by Germany. That is the one political thought which permeates German intelligence at this moment, and no other considerations must be allowed to darken this issue.

Professor Oncken reviews the events of the

period 1900–1914 in considerable detail, and to him the policy of *ententes* appears to be the main cause leading up to the world war. From this alone it is obvious that, consciously or unconsciously, he is wrong; the *ententes* in themselves are results, not prime causes. The prime causes leading to these political agreements are to be found in Germany's attitude to the rest of Europe. In a word they were defensive actions taken by the Powers concerned, as a precaution against German aggression.

German aggression consisted in committing herself to unlimited armaments, cherishing the irreconcilable determination to be the strongest European power. According to her doctrine of might, everything can be attained by the mightiest. British advances she answered with battleships, simultaneously provoking France and Russia by increasing her army corps. The balance of power in Europe, Germany declares to be an out-of-date British fad, invented solely in the interests of these islands.

In secret Germany has long been an apostate to the balance-of-power theory; the war has caused her to drop the mask, and it was without doubt her resolve never to submit to the chains of the balance in Europe, which forced three other States to waive their differences and form the Triple Entente. Simply stated this is cause and result. But Professor Oncken maintains—and in doing so he voices German national opinion—

that the entire *entente* policy was a huge scheme to bring about Germany's downfall.

He goes further and proclaims that the Hague Conference (1907) was a British trick to place the guilt of armaments on Germany's shoulders. "England filled the world with disarmament projects so that afterwards, full of unction, she could denounce Germany as the disturber of the peace. At that time the Imperial Chancellor answered justly: 'Pressure cannot be brought to bear on Germany, not even moral pressure!'"* And in that sentence German obstinacy and sullen irreconcilability is most admirably expressed.

Having seen that Professor Oncken has failed to recognize the prime causes which provoked the *entente* policy, it is not surprising to find him equally in error when discussing the diplomatic clashes between the rival camps. The professor calls them *Machtproben* ("tests of power"); but how he can dare to state that these diplomatic trials of strength were engineered by Great Britain—remains his own secret.

"King Edward's meeting with the Czar at Reval in June, 1908, was followed by a far-reaching Macedonian reform programme, the commencement of the division of European Turkey. What Britain had failed to induce Germany to help her in executing, was to be attained with the sword's point directed against Germany. And Britain proceeded in cold blood

* "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," p. 495.

to conjure up an era of might-struggles, which, in the island language, is called preserving the balance of power."*

The trials of strength recounted by Oncken are the Bosnian crisis, the Morocco question, and the Austro-Serbian quarrel which led to the present war. It seems banal to have to point out that Bosnia was unlawfully annexed by Germany's vassal—Austria; that Germany, herself, brought Europe to the verge of war by sending the *Panther* to Agadir; and that the final catastrophic *Machtprobe* was likewise provoked by Germany's eastern vassal.

For good or evil Germany has been convinced for nearly two decades that the balance of power in Europe was an obstacle to her world future. Furthermore, she believed that the balance imposed fetters upon her which only mighty armaments could break. All Germany's energies in the domain of diplomacy have been set in motion to make the balance of power a mere figment of the imagination.

In pursuing this end it has suited her purpose to declare all attempts at maintaining the outward appearances of equality between the Powers of Europe to be Machiavellian schemes against her existence; or to cite the Kaiser's own words, "to deprive Germany of her place in the sun."

Britain's *entente* policy was the only one calculated to preserve our own existence, and to

* Ibid., p. 297.

restrain Germany from establishing a hegemony in Europe. She was completely convinced that the domination of Europe belonged to her by right of mental, moral and military superiority over her neighbours. Not in vain have Germany's educational institutions inculcated the belief in her population that the British Empire is an effete monstrosity with feet of clay; France a rotten, decaying empire, and Russia a barbarian Power with no new *Kultur* to offer Europe except the knout.

Inspired by such conceptions, together with an astoundingly exaggerated idea of Germany's peerlessness in order, discipline, obedience, morality, genius and other ethical values, as well as an unshaken belief in Germany's invincibility by land and sea—the entire nation, from Kaiser to cobbler, has long since held that by right of these virtues—by right of her absolute superiority over all other nations—Germany could and must claim other rights and powers than those which fell to her under an antiquated balance of European power.

In few words that is the gospel of *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. These are the motives which inspired Germany's naval expansion and forbade her to accept a compromise. The same ideals led to her endeavours to shatter the *ententes*, and it is alone the general acceptance of this gospel, which explains the remarkable unanimity with which the German nation has

stood behind the Kaiser's Government in each trial of strength. They have learned to consider all attempts of the lesser peoples (Britain, France and Russia included) to maintain themselves against the Teutonic onset as impudent attacks on sacred Germany, which also illuminates the fact that Germans call the present struggle—"Germany's holy, sacred war."

German statesmen were quite clear as to the national course at least fifteen years ago. Hence they have persistently pursued a policy of no compromise and no agreements. A compromise recognizes and perpetuates, in part at least, the very thing which stands in the way. An agreement with Britain in regard to naval armaments would have perpetuated British naval supremacy, as well as recognized its necessity. Likewise an agreement, or the shadow of an understanding with France on the question of Alsace-Lorraine would have been a recognition of French claims. Hence on these two questions—which are merely given as examples illustrative of German mentality—every attempt at an agreement has been a failure.

A cardinal point in Germany's programme has been the consistent manner in which she has tried to separate her European neighbours from Britain in order to deal with them separately or alone. That her endeavours ended in failure is due to the instinct of self-preservation which has drawn Germany's opponents closer together, in exact proportion to the increasing force of her

efforts. Both in peace and war, Germany desired and endeavoured to switch off Britain's influence in Europe.

The diplomatic battles of 1905, 1908 and 1911 were a few of the efforts to dislodge Great Britain from her *ententes*, while her repeated attempts to buy this country's neutrality, down to the eve of war, are proof that Germany wanted a free hand in Europe.* If she had succeeded in her purpose, it is exceedingly doubtful whether any Power could have prevented her from exercising a free hand in the whole world.

Coming down to the last trial of diplomatic power, we are confronted by the immovable fact, that it too was a challenge on the part of the Central Empires. The conditions seemed peculiarly favourable to them, for the British Ambassador declared to the Russian Government on July 24th, 1914, that Britain would never draw the sword on a purely Serbian question. Moreover, in the preceding year, a British minister, says Professor Schiemann, had given what we may

* Professor Schiemann: "Wie England eine Verständigung mit Deutschland verhinderte" ("How England prevented an Understanding with Germany"). Berlin, 1915; pp. 20–21: "From the very commencement Berlin was convinced that the probability of a combined Franco-Russian attack was exceedingly small, if England's entrance to this Germanophobe combination could be prevented. Therefore we endeavoured to secure England's neutrality in case of war (1909), that is, if an Anglo-German alliance could not be achieved—an alliance which would have guaranteed the world's peace." (Schiemann's insinuation that Germany desired an alliance is an instance of *suggestio falsi*. Germany had decided in 1902 never to conclude an alliance with this country.—Author.)

style a remarkable semi-official promise that Great Britain would never go to war with Germany.

"On February 18th, 1913, Mr. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., paid me a visit, and assured me with the greatest certainty that England would under no circumstances wage war on Germany. A ministry which made preparations for war, would be immediately overthrown."*

Professor Schiemann affirms that his good impression was strengthened by a visit to London during March and April, 1914, and reports a conversation which he had with Lord Haldane when dining privately with the latter in London. After returning to Berlin, he says he received a letter from Lord Haldane dated April 17th, 1914, but from Schiemann's quotation it is not evident whether the following is an extract or the entire letter:

"It was a great pleasure to see you and to have had the full and unreserved talk we had together. My ambition is like yours, to bring Germany and Great Britain into relations of ever-closer intimacy and friendship. Our two countries have a common work to do for the world as well as for themselves,

* Ibid., p. 27. In the light of this revelation it would be interesting to know what was the real motive which induced Mr. Trevelyan to resign his office when war broke out. Either he was conscious of having seriously compromised his position as a Minister of the Crown, or he conscientiously believed that Britain was drawing the sword in an unjust cause. Unfortunately a section of the British public accepted the latter interpretation. In any case, Mr. Trevelyan's indiscretion affords overwhelming proof that he had an utterly false conception of Germany.—Author.

and each of them can bring to bear on this work special endowments and qualities. May the co-operation which I believe is now beginning become closer and closer.*

" Of this I am sure, the more wide and unselfish the nations and the groups questions make her supreme purposes of their policies, the more will frictions disappear, and the sooner will the relations that are normal and healthy reappear.† Something of this good work has now come into existence between our two peoples. We must see to it that the chance of growth is given."‡

It is not difficult to conceive that such utterances, on the part of two British ministers, would raise hopes in the German mind, for it would be useless to imagine that Professor Schiemann would keep them secret for his own private edification. And it is possible that they led the German Government into a false reckoning as to what this country would do under certain circumstances, and so encouraged Germany into taking up an irreconcilable attitude in the crisis of July, 1914.

Whatever Germany expected must, however, for the present, remain a matter of conjecture. Schiemann's comment on the above letter leaves

* Lord Haldane has stated during the war that his visit to Berlin in 1912 had filled his mind with doubt and suspicion in regard to Germany. —Author.

† A word or phrase appears to have been dropped in this sentence. —Author.

‡ Professor Schiemann's book, pp. 27–8.

no doubt that he expected Lord Haldane* to resign. "When one remembers that Lord Haldane belonged to the inner circle of the Cabinet, and was therefore privy to all the secret moves of Sir Edward Grey, it is hard to believe in the sincerity of the sentiments expressed in this letter. Besides, he did not resign like three other members of the Cabinet (Lord Morley, Burns and Charles Trevelyan) when Sir Edward's foul play lay open to the world on August 4th."

The most regrettable side of the whole incident is that the resignation of the above gentlemen has been proclaimed by innumerable German writers as proof of Sir Edward Grey's double dealing, and proof that Britain is waging an unjust war. Still, it may console these gentlemen to know that the nation which wages war on women and children acclaims them to-day "all honourable men," and doubtless without the Shakespearian intonation.

By reason of the above incidents, and more of a similar nature, Germans accuse the late Liberal Government with perfidy of the basest kind. The author is not in the least inclined to admit the charge, but thinks, rather, that the Government in question—individually and collectively—was astonishingly ignorant of European conditions and problems, especially those prevailing in the Germanic Empires.

* Lord Haldane seems to have injured his reputation both in Great Britain and Germany. Professor Oncken designates him: "the one-time friend of Germany, the decoy-bird of the British cabinet." *Vide* "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," p. 561.

To what a degree Germany was obsessed by the idea that Britain was trying to strangle her by an encircling policy, is apparent in a diplomatic document quoted by Professor Oncken. Its author's name is not given, and it was doubtless a secret report sent to the German Foreign Office in 1912; its freedom from bias is also questionable. Moreover, it is probable that it belongs to the same category of documents as those quoted in the French Yellow Book—reports intended to exercise due influence on the mind of the Emperor.

"French diplomacy is succeeding more and more in entangling England in the meshes of her net. The encouragement which England gives, directly or indirectly, to French chauvinism may one day end in a catastrophe in which English and French soldiers must pay with their blood on French battlefields for England's encircling policy. The seeds sown by King Edward are springing up."

Another link in the chain of proof of Britain's guilt, is found in the documents seized by the Germans in Brussels. The enemy seems to attach great importance to them, for they are being employed in much the same way that parliamentary candidates use pamphlets during an election. Yet they do not contain a particle of proof that Britain had hostile intentions against Germany, but only confirm the presence of the German menace.

The documents* in question are reports sent by

* Published by the Berlin Government as supplements to the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 29th and 31st; August 4th, 8th and 12th, 1915.

the Belgian Legation Secretaries in London, Paris and Berlin to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Brussels. These gentlemen held opinions identical with those expressed again and again in German newspapers, and even in some British and French organs. Messieurs Comte de Lalaing (London), Greindl (Berlin), Leghait (Paris), evidently believed that the activities of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente endangered the peace of Europe.

Further they believed the latter constellation to be the more aggressive of the two, and formally reported these convictions to the Belgian Government. If read as a modern edition of "Pepys' Diary" they form entertaining literature, but by no stretch of the imagination could they be classed as historical sources. A gentleman who reports to his Government that King Edward took breakfast in company with M. Delcassé and that the Press had neglected to chronicle the incident, can hardly rank as an historian.

Moreover, it is by no means clear why the German Press should laud M. Greindl as a gentleman of German origin. If this be true it would probably explain everything which deserves explanation in the said documents, and would probably account for the intimate, confidential treatment which M. Greindl received at the hands of German officials.

German newspapers are gloating over the fact that the British Government has not deigned to reply to these "revelations." There is really nothing to which it can reply; three observers

expressed their opinion on contemporaneous happenings during the years 1905–1911. But a brutal sequence of events in 1914 showed them—if they had not been convinced during the preceding three years—that they had drawn false conclusions from their observations.

To return to the last trial of strength between the two groups of European Powers, it is interesting to note that Professor Oncken denies German participation in formulating the ultimatum to Serbia, or that Germany was aware of its contents. Germany merely left Austria a free hand in the matter. Oncken endeavours to show that Austria's demands were not excessive, and expresses astonishment that the opposing Powers found them exorbitant. He does not mention the fact that a large section of the German nation held the same opinion on July 25th, 1914.

His comment on Sir Edward Grey's efforts for peace is characteristic: "England claims that she did everything possible to preserve the peace. It cannot be denied that Grey made a series of mediation proposals. But mere good-will is not everything. It is much more important to weigh their practical importance, and the goal at which they aimed: Whether they were intended to preserve the world's peace under conditions honourable for all parties, or calculated to obtain for the *Entente* a one-sided diplomatic victory which would have established its future predominance."*

* "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," p. 544.

"Grey considered the moment suitable for a mediation proposal. On the evening of July 26th, after obtaining Russia's consent, he proposed to the Governments of France, Germany and Italy that their London ambassadors should meet in London to confer on a peaceful solution of the conflict.

"The proposal was unacceptable to Austria, because it would have been an indirect recognition on her part of Russia's interest in the conflict.

"Only those who had followed the growing intimacy of the mutual obligations between the Entente Powers, and their organization to a 'London Centre' during the summer of 1914, are able to estimate the rôle—to say nothing of Italy—which Russia's two comrades would have played in the conference. During its course Russia would have continued her military preparations, while Germany would have had to pledge herself not to mobilize.

"Finally, no unprejudiced observer would dare assert that the man (Sir Edward Grey) who was ready to transform himself at a suitable opportunity into an ally of Russia, would have been an impartial chairman in a conference held under the pressure of a Russian mobilization. The more one thinks about this mediation proposal the more convinced one becomes, that it would at least have worked for a diplomatic victory for the Entente Powers.

"Grey put the whole machinery of the Triple

Entente in motion in order to force back Germany and Austria-Hungary along the whole line."*

An analysis of Professor Oncken's theses gives the following results: First, Britain's efforts to preserve peace are admitted, but he fails to mention any friendly advances to meet them. Secondly, the fundamental principle underlying the Germanic attitude is again exposed, viz., that Russia had no right to intervene in a question affecting the balance of power in the Balkans and in Europe (*vide*, p. 63). Thirdly, a diplomatic struggle was in progress along the whole line, between the two groups of Powers.

In weighing the second point it would be wrong to assume that the Central Empires were not fully aware of the presence of a far more vital question behind the Austro-Serbian conflict. They knew it from the very beginning and had already expressed threats in St. Petersburg, hoping to achieve the same effect as in the Bosnian crisis. If Austria had been allowed to destroy Serbia's military power the material forces of Europe would have been seriously disturbed; the ineffectiveness of the Triple Entente finally established, and its dissolution the inevitable consequence.

If these considerations are correct then the statement attributed by M. de L'Escaille (see p. 281) to Sir George Buchanan that Britain would never draw the sword could only have served to strengthen the resolution of the Germanic Powers in enforcing

* Ibid., p. 545 *et seq.*

their point. Germany above all desired that the balance of power theory should be finally smashed, and it may be safely assumed that an Austro-Serbian conflict seemed to her a most fitting opportunity to realize her purpose.

The third point suggests two questions. Who provoked the diplomatic conflict, and who would have benefited most by a diplomatic victory? A reply to the first question is superfluous, and the answer to the second is obvious from the preceding line of reasoning. Germany would have reached the goal towards which she had striven for more than a decade—the removal of all diplomatic hindrances to the unlimited assertion of her will in Europe. It may even be doubted whether the Dual Alliance would have survived the shock.

Another phase of Professor Oncken's work is the open attack on Sir Edward Grey. Only three years ago this statesman was acclaimed in Germany as a man of peace—*the* man who had prevented the Balkan War from becoming a European conflagration. To-day he is accused by the same nation of being the originator of the world war.

Oncken* goes back to the year 1905 and states that Sir Edward Grey initiated only two members of the Cabinet—Mr. Asquith and Lord Haldane—into the details of the agreement with France, and these three gentlemen he refers to as the " inner

* The authorities (?) most frequently cited by Professor Oncken in making out his case are Messrs. Morel, Macdonald, Hardie, G. B. Shaw and the *Labour Leader*.—Author.

circle." King Edward, and afterwards Sir Edward Grey in continuing the late King's policy, succeeded in harnessing the *revanche idée* and the spirit of Russian aggression to the chariot of British Imperialism. All offers of friendship made by this country were insincere. (The professorial pleader does not say so, but he leaves his readers to infer that sincerity is a German monopoly.) Concerning the British Minister's declaration in Parliament that no secret treaty existed with France, Oncken remarks: "The declaration was just as true formally as it was a lie in essentials."

Following the development of events after the conference proposal had been dropped, Oncken writes: "Meanwhile the Russian Government endeavoured to persuade England's leading statesman that the opinion prevailed in Germany and Austria, that England would remain neutral in every case, in consequence of this delusion the Central Powers were obdurate. England could only dispel the danger of war by destroying this false conception, *i.e.*, openly joining Russia and France.

"It is noteworthy how quickly Grey assimilated this train of thought. Disregarding the suggestions of the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg, he did nothing to exercise a moderating influence upon Russia and thereby further the success of the conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg. On the other hand, he proceeded to take steps which probably in his opinion, were calculated to damp the supposed desire for war on the part of

Germany. Practically, the result of all his actions was to exercise one-sided pressure upon Germany and Austria and simultaneously, through unmistakable declarations concerning England's eventual attitude, to encourage Paris and St. Petersburg to energetic measures.

"But all hopes for peace were destroyed at a single blow by Russia. On the evening of July 30th after the conversations with Austria-Hungary had been resumed, Sasonow increased his demands—and in truth with England's co-operation—to such a degree that their acceptance would have meant the complete submission of the Dual Monarchy.

"And as if this were insufficient, a few hours later, before a reply had been received and while negotiations were proceeding in Vienna, Russia suddenly broke off the communications with a momentous decision (mobilization). The certainty which she had gained from the moves of English diplomacy, that in case of war she was sure of France's support and with it England's, turned the scale—against peace.

"That this calculation was decisive for Russia's change of front is confirmed by a witness whose impartiality even our opponents will admit."*

Professor Oncken then supports his argument with quotations from a letter written by the Belgian Legation Secretary in St. Petersburg to his Government. The letter was doubtless stolen while in transit by the Berlin postal authorities. Monsieur

* "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," pp. 553–4.

B. de l'Escaille wrote the letter on July 30th, despatched it by courier to Berlin, where it was posted on the following day. The outside envelope was addressed to Madame Costermans, 107 Rue Froissard, Bruxelles; inside was a letter addressed to M. Darignon, Minister for Foreign Affairs. German writers state that no letters were forwarded to foreign countries after martial law was proclaimed on July 31st (a statement which is untrue), thus it fell into their hands.

Overwhelming importance is attached to this document by German war writers. The more important passages of the despatch run as follows: "The last two days have passed in the expectation of events which are bound to follow* upon Austria-Hungary's declaration of war against Serbia. The most contradictory reports were in circulation, without any possibility of confirming their truth or falsity.

"One thing is, however, indisputable, viz., that Germany has done everything possible both here and in Vienna† to find a means of avoiding a general conflict, but has only been met with the determination of the Vienna cabinet, on the one hand, not to yield a single step, and on the other hand Russian distrust of Vienna's declaration that they merely intend a punitive expedition against Serbia.

"One must really believe that everybody wants

* Thus the impartial witness whom Germans quote to prove their innocence definitely states that Russia had no other course left open to her by Austria's actions.—Author.

† How could M. de l'Escaille know what had passed in Vienna?—Author.

war, and is only anxious to postpone the declaration in order to gain time. At first England gave out, that she would not allow herself to be drawn into a conflict. Sir George Buchanan said that definitely. But to-day they are firmly convinced in St. Petersburg, indeed they have received an assurance, that England will stand by France. This support is of extraordinary importance, and has contributed not a little to the war-party gaining the upper hand.

"In the cabinet sitting held yesterday, there were differences of opinion, and the mobilization order was postponed. This morning at four o'clock mobilization was ordered.

"The Russian army feels itself strong, and is full of enthusiasm. The reorganization of the navy is still so incomplete that it would be out of the count in case of war. For that reason England's assurance of help was of the greatest consequence."*

If Professor Oncken is correct in stating that Sir Edward Grey's measures were calculated to exercise a pressure on Germany and Austria, then he merely confirms what this country has hitherto believed—Sir Edward Grey acted rightly. Where else should he have exerted pressure except in the quarter from whence a provocative, insolent challenge had proceeded ?

With regard to the assertion that Russia—stiffened by England—took a "momentous

* "Kriegs-Depeschen, 1914" ("German War-Telegrams, 1914"). Berlin, 1914; p. 96 *et seq.*

decision" on the evening of July 30th, Professor Oncken is guilty of distortion. The decision to mobilize had been taken earlier, and as M. de l'Escaille wrote, was made public at four o'clock on the morning of July 30th.

Whether Russia had increased her demands ("peremptorily sharpened" are Oncken's words) the reader can judge for himself by comparing the two texts.

I	II
"If Austria, recognizing that the Austro-Serbian question has assumed the character of a European question, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum the points which infringe the sovereign rights of Serbia, Russia engages to stop her military preparations." (Russian Orange Book, No. 60.)	"If Austria agrees to stay the advance of her troops on Serbian territory, and if, recognizing that the Austro-Serbian dispute has assumed the character of a question of European interest, she admits that the Great Powers shall examine the satisfaction which Serbia might give to the Austro-Hungarian Government without affecting her sovereign rights and independence, Russia undertakes to maintain her waiting attitude." (French Yellow Book, No. 113.)

Oncken, in making this comparison, comments: "It is most remarkable that the original formula chosen by Sasonow had been peremptorily sharpened (*einschneidend verschärft*) on July 31st at the request of the British Ambassador. This interference by England in the formulation of the proposal must arouse the gravest doubt regarding the peaceful tendencies of England's policy. Sasonow had every reason to thank Grey 'for the firm, amicable tone which he has employed in his pourparlers with Germany and Austria.'"*

Sir Edward Grey had proposed five days earlier (July 26th) that all military measures should cease pending a settlement. Hence the introduction of this clause is not a new demand. Moreover, in the meantime Russia and Germany—in spite of the latter's denial—had commenced to mobilize; Austria had mobilized and commenced hostilities against Serbia. Thus there were far more urgent reasons to include the cessation of military measures on July 31st than before. Lastly, it was the only acceptable pledge of Austrian sincerity which Russia could accept. Whether the formula would have met with Austria's approval cannot be determined, for Austria was saved from what Oncken terms "complete submission" by Germany's ultimatum to Russia, despatched on the same day, July 31st.

It is impossible to get rid of the suspicion that

* "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," p. 553. Oncken's quotation in the last line is taken from the Russian Orange Book, No. 69.

Germany thought Austria might accept the proposal; in any case, Germany deliberately shattered the last chance of a settlement by her demand that Russia should demobilize.

If Germany outwardly worked for peace in St. Petersburg, as M. de l'Escaille states, it would be quite in harmony with the methods of German diplomacy. But, as the same gentleman testifies: "Austria would not yield a step"—the conclusion must be drawn that Germany had ordered her to stand firm. Austria did not yield a single inch, and so it is a matter of indifference as to the sincerity or otherwise of Germany's peace endeavours.

Oncken further mentions Britain's refusal to remain neutral in return for a promise that French territory should not be annexed, but he omits the question of French colonies. His analysis of the Belgian question deserves quotation: "Grey was seeking an excuse for war, and he found one in the question of Belgian neutrality. It was just such a reason as he required in order to carry away the Cabinet, Parliament and public opinion. And since then that reason has been much discussed, accompanied by appeals to international law and humanity, by England's and the world's Press.

"But there is more than one irrefutable proof at hand, to show that this reason for war, was merely a veil covering the real ones. Anticipating Grey's intentions, before the German Government

had finally declared themselves on the subject,* Prince Lichnowsky put the question to Sir Edward Grey on August 1st, as to whether England would remain neutral if Germany undertook to respect the neutrality of Belgium.

"Grey, however, refused to give the pledge with which he could—if he was really concerned about Belgium—have spared that unhappy land its terrible fate. But by these means the trump card of Belgian neutrality had been taken from our opponent's hand in advance. Yet Grey actually considered it permissible to conceal this offer from the British Cabinet. Yes, he dared even more.

"After the matter had been mentioned by Ramsay Macdonald in the *Labour Leader*, Keir Hardie asked a question in the House of Commons on August 27th, as to whether Lichnowsky's proposal had been submitted to the Cabinet, and why the same had not been made the basis of peaceful negotiations with Germany. Grey made a weak attempt to discriminate between official proposals made by a government, and a private question asked by an ambassador.

"When the inconvenient questioner asked for further information, he was cried down. The Oxford theologian Conybeare gained the impression from this Parliamentary incident: 'That all Sir Edward Grey's answers to Mr. Keir Hardie's

* Britain had asked Germany a day or two before, whether she would respect Belgium's neutrality.—Author.

questions are examples of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*.' His later revocation of this judgment does not alter its value as objective evidence.

"After Grey's refusal, Prince Lichnowsky pressed him to formulate England's conditions for her neutrality. At the same time the Ambassador increased his offer of July 29th by proposing to guarantee the integrity of France and her colonies in return for England's neutrality. Grey suppressed this proposal too before the Cabinet, as any negotiation on this basis would have thwarted his preconceived plans. Only an immovable determination for war can explain this behaviour.

"Even before he could assume that Belgian neutrality was in danger, he pledged English policy to the wishes of France. On the afternoon of the same August 1st, he gave the French Ambassador—who was anxiously pressing for a decision—reason to believe that he would be able to give a formal promise on the following day. At the Cabinet meeting on August 2nd—the same in which he suppressed Germany's offer!—he got a motion accepted empowering him to assure Cambon that if Germany attacked the French coast, England would intervene."

It is necessary to return to Germany's proposal in regard to Belgian neutrality. In simple language it means that Germany wanted to sell her pledged word, given in 1839, for British neutrality in 1914. In view of the fact that Professor Oncken looked upon this as a legitimate

bargain, one wonders in silence at his standard of morality and honour. Is he not a scoundrel who first gives his word of honour and afterwards tries to strike a bargain with the same ? Stripped of all verbiage that is Germany's proposal in its naked immorality, and the author chronicles with pleasure that the House of Commons cried down even its discussion. It recalls to his memory the fact, that the Reichstag—Germany's highest legislative assembly—cheered to the echo Bethmann-Hollweg's announcement that German armies, in violating the dictates of moral and international law, by breaking Germany's word of honour, had occupied Luxembourg and entered Belgium. The two incidents are drastic, concrete illustrations of the gulf which separates British and German conceptions of right and wrong.

Furthermore, there are two questions of a disciplinary nature arising out of this incident which " the man in the street " has a perfect right to raise. Assuming that Sir Edward Grey exercised his discretion and concealed the " infamous proposal " from the Cabinet, which of his colleagues afterwards betrayed the fact and from what source—German or English—did he obtain his information ?

Full knowledge on these points would probably be of great assistance in destroying the " trail of the serpent " (*i.e.*, German influence and intrigues) in the political and national life of Great Britain.

Professor Oncken praises German disinterestedness in offering to guarantee the integrity of

French continental and colonial territories in case Germany gained a victory in the war. Sir Edward Grey's refusal to guarantee British neutrality in return for this promise, the professor considers supreme and final proof that Britain was bent on war. The nation has rightly approved of this policy and the point need not be argued in this place; but Professor Oncken in the seclusion of his German study would do well to weigh two problems:

If Germany had gained a victory—and in August, 1914, she was absolutely convinced that France and Russia would succumb if they faced her alone—then Germany would have obtained the long sought upper and "free hand" in Europe. What earthly powers could have compelled her in that moment to respect her promise in regard to French territories? Certainly Germany's sense of honour could not be counted upon to do so.

The second problem refers to the bull and the china-shop. Presuming that the bull could talk, would Professor Oncken advise the guardian of the proverbial china-shop to accept the bull's promise to respect the *status quo ante* of his property, before letting him (the bull) run amock amongst the china?

Lastly, readers are advised when studying the German "case" to remember that Germany never offered to respect the integrity of French territories *and* the neutrality of Belgium. Although German writers—with malice aforethought—seek to give

that impression. Yet, had this combined offer been made, the author submits that in spite of such a promise, it would still have been ruinous to British interests to stand aside and see Germany gain the upper and "free hand" in Europe. Having obtained that, all else would have followed to the desire of Germany's heart.

CHAPTER XII

THE LITERATURE OF HATE

"The English are wretched scoundrels."
—*Frederick the Great.*

"It must come to this, that not even a German dog will accept a piece of bread from an Englishman."—*Heinrich von Treitschke.*

"England, the Vampire of Europe," by Count Reventlow.

"Down with England," by Admiral Valois.

"England, our Enemy in the Past, Present and Future," by Erich von Kahler.

"A German Victory, Ireland's Hope," by Dr. Hans Rost.

"England, the Scourge of Humanity," by Germanicus.

"The Poisonous Press," by Germanicus.

"England against England," by Mathieu Schwann.

"A Woman's War Letters," by L. Niessen-Deiters.

"Albion's Death Struggle," by Eugen Detmolder.*

"How John Bull recruits his Hirelings," by Dr. Herbert Hirschberg.

"Advance on England! The Destruction of Britain's World Power," Anonymous.

"In English Captivity," by Heinrich Norden, late missionary.

"British *versus* German Imperium," by an Irish-American. Introduction by Sir Roger Casement.

"Lousyhead goes on Lying." The latest war news of Messrs. Grandebouche (France), Lousyhead (Russia), and Plumpudding (England), by Karl Ettlinger.

"England and Germany," by Houston Stewart Chamberlain.

"Cable Warfare and the Campaign of Lies," by Dr. Meister, Professor in Münster University.

"England and Continental Interests," by Captain H. Schubart.

"The Annihilation of England's World Power," Essays by twenty-three different authors, including Professors Haeckel, Eucken and Lamprecht; State Secretary Dr. Dernburg; Dr. Sven Hedin, etc.

"German Misery in London," by Carl Peters.

"The English Face," by six university professors; Frischeisen-Köhler (Berlin); Jastrow (Berlin); von der Goltz (Greifswald); Roloff (Giessen); Valentin (Freiburg); von Liszt (Berlin).

* Written by Detmolder (a Belgian) during the Boer War.—Author.

"Starvation, England's Latest Ally," by Friedrich Simon.

"England and the War," by Professor Lujo Brentano.

"Against France and Albion," by A. Fendrich.

"The Land of Unlimited Hypocrisy," by Spiridion Gopčević.*

"England"; "England and America," *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* (South German Review) for January and May, 1915.

"England's Tyranny and former Supremacy of the Seas," by Admiral Kirchoff.

"England's Blood-Guilt against the White Peoples," by Woldemar Schütze.

"The Greatest Criminal against Humanity; King Edward VII. of England. A Curse-pamphlet," by Lieut.-Col. R. Wagner.

"England, tremble!" by J. Bermbach.

"England as Sea-Pirate State," by Dr. Ernst Schultze.

"In the Pillory! Our Enemies' Campaign of Lies," by Reinhold Anton.

"London's Lie Factory: Reuter's Office," by A. Brand.

"England's Wicked Deeds in the World's History," by A. Kuhn.

"Our Settlement with England," by Professor Hermann Oncken.

* Probably the most scurrilous and vulgar work of its type; but the writer of it is not a German.—Author.

" England's Betrayal of Germany," by M. Wildgrube.

" England's Guilt," by Gaston von Mallmann.

" English Character," by Professor Arnold Schröer.

" England and We," by Dr. J. Riessner, President of the Hanseatic League.

" How England prevented an Understanding with Germany," by Professor Th. Schiemann.

" God Punish England," published by *Simplicissimus*.

" Perfidious Albion," by Alfred Geiser.

" Our Enemies among Themselves," Caricatures from 1792–1900 collected by Dr. Paul Weiglin.

" Words in Season," Poems, including the " Hymn of Hate," by Ernst Lissauer.

About sixty-five other titles might be added to those given above, but the author has restricted the list to books in his possession. Some of them are scurrilous and obscene, deserving no further attention than a record of their existence. Yet the fundamental idea running through these works is identical, differing only in the mode of expression.

Hate in itself is a confession of weakness, to a certain extent an admission of defeat. The presence of hate in a nation or an individual may be explained as resulting from the desire to remove or destroy an obstacle, which has proved to be immovable and indestructible. A healthy, well-balanced mind

admits defeat and endeavours to make a compromise —to adjust itself to the inevitable.

But assuming other conditions—a false sense of honour, a morbid conception of self-importance—then hate seems to be a natural, although unhealthy result. Unfortunately there is evidence that these factors influence modern Germany. One of the roots of tragedy is to be found in the inequality between the will and power to perform. In its helplessness the will recoils upon itself, turning to gall and bitterness, or seeks a solution in self-destruction.

It is noteworthy that some thirteen thousand individuals commit suicide every year in Germany. Unwilling or unable to adjust themselves to the phenomena of life, they choose death in preference to the compromise—life. A leaning towards the tragic characterizes the German of to-day; an inclination not to compromise, not to admit defeat, thereby admitting the "will" to be incapable of transformance into actuality.

Between Germany and Britain fate has placed such a rock of destiny, *i.e.*, this country's position in the world, above all, her naval supremacy. Germany has held that this rock hinders, even endangers, her just and historical development in the world. With wonderful energy, perseverance, self-sacrifice and heroism, Germany has endeavoured to surmount or destroy the obstacle. The united will of the nation was expressed in the momentum of the onslaught—in vain. And as

no reconciling influences are at work, no tendency to accept the inevitable—Germany hates.

Outside Germany there is, probably, no one who doubts the invincibility of the British Navy and the unchangeable will of the British (strengthened by the danger of the past year) to maintain its supremacy. Yet even to-day responsible Germans are appealing to their nation to fight till "modern Carthage" is finally destroyed.

"In spite of the publications of our enemies, we in Germany, from the highest to the lowest, will believe unto all eternity that this war was caused by England alone. All Germany replied to England's declaration of war with a cry of indignation. The hate for the hypocritical island kingdom was so bitter that it took the form of demonstrations against the British Embassy, while the representatives of the other enemy countries were able to depart unharmed.*

"Up till then political England was little known in Germany, but now the bitter hate which reigns throughout the land characterizes her as the incarnation of all that is base and vile. It brings back to our minds the saying of the old Hanseatic towns:

> 'England, thou land of shame,
> Why hast thou, Satansland,
> The name of Angel-land?'

"No sacrifice and no effort will be too great, for

* Admiral Valois appears to be unaware that both ladies and gentlemen from the Russian Embassy were beaten with sticks, fists and umbrellas before leaving Berlin.—Author.

us to drag her from her imagined height into the dust. By force of arms, starvation and the power of lies, they hoped to force us back to unimportance, and now the issue is: Whether the categoric imperative of the East Prussian Kant, or the hypocrisy of British cant, shall gain the victory.

"We are unalterably convinced that England is our mortal enemy, and that all endeavours to find a *modus vivendi* will be in vain. Still our present naval forces are unequal to the task of overthrowing her. This will make it easy for the German Government to obtain even the greatest sums from the Reichstag in order to increase our fleet. Every other aim—no matter what it is—must be laid aside, till this one is attained: Down with England!

"It is to be hoped that this attempt on England's part to get rid of a competitor will be the last. We Germans anticipate the future with an unshakable belief in victory. Possibly sooner or later, England's present allies will see that in reality they are serving English interests. When this unnatural alliance has crumbled to pieces under the might of our blows, then we shall at last stand face to face with England—alone!

"Our life-work will then begin—to settle up with the pioneers of hypocrisy so that they shall never again cross our path! If at any time this high endeavour seems to slacken, then think of East Prussia! Remember that a third of the province was laid waste; that men, women and children were murdered and violated; that the lists of the

missing contained the names of nearly fifty thousand fellow-countrymen. And all this had to happen so that every Englishman might become a few pounds richer.

" Think of it as long as you live, and pass it on to your descendants as an inheritance. Give all your strength and your last farthing to increase our fleet and any other necessary means to attain our goal: Down with England ! "*

" Truly it is no longer necessary either in this assembly or in all Germany to create popular opinion for the cry ' Nieder mit England ! ' It re-echoes daily from the lips of every German. But still we must continue to point out its necessity—it is a commandment which must banish every weak inclination to yield, and make us strong to hold out to the bitter end.

" To some it may appear ' one-sided,' but yet it is a moral duty to emphasize and strengthen our hate for England. Not only because we *will* hate, but because we *must*. Hatred ennobles when it is directed with full force against the evil and bad. And what is the evil ? For an answer consider how the English pedlar-spirit with cunning and lies, has subjugated the world and holds it in bondage.

" Even in the upper classes (English), ignorance reigns supreme. In their famous schools, *e.g.*, Eton College, the young people—besides sports and so-called gentlemanlike behaviour—learn ex-

* Admiral Valois : " Nieder mit England ! " (" Down with England ! ") p. 5 *et. seq.*

ceedingly little. Except in regard to purely English affairs most Englishmen possess an almost inconceivable ignorance of history and geography. The view held by so many Germans that the majority of the English nation, especially the so-called 'upper ten,' have enjoyed a thorough education—is utterly false. But in spite of this, English conceit and unexampled pride leaves little to be desired."*

All German naval writers whine in unison concerning the "protection of private property in naval warfare." The shoe appears to pinch at that point, but the complaints sound hollow when made by a nation which has shown so little respect for private property in land warfare.

"Turkey was compelled to hand over Cyprus; in return she received an assurance of protection from England. What the latter understands by 'protection' we have learned from her recent actions. The behaviour of England's last naval commission in Constantinople speaks volumes. The very men who were in Turkey's pay, destroyed the weapons (ships, *i.e.*, cannon, machinery, etc.) entrusted to their care."†

Besides Kirchhoff, several other writers charge the British naval officers who were in Turkey's service before the outbreak of war, with acts of *sabotage*. Another writer (Heinrich Norden, late

* Vice-Admiral Kirchhoff: "England's Willkur" ("England's Tyranny"), p. 1 *et seq.*

† Ibid., p. 31.

missionary in Duala, German Cameroons) sinks a little lower and states that English officers were guilty of thieving when Duala was captured.

"Indeed, it is not saying too much when I maintain that the true historical purpose of this war, is only half fulfilled if we do not bring England to her knees—cost what it may in blood and treasure. That much we owe to our children and their children. We will not only be victorious, victory is only half the work; we must annihilate the power of our enemy.

"All our dearly-bought victories in East and West will be of no avail if, at the conclusion of peace, we have not conquered and compelled England to accept our terms. There can never be justice or morality on earth, or keeping of treaties, or recognition of moral international obligations, till the power of the most faithless, hypocritical nation which ever existed, has been finally broken and lies prostrate on the ground. So long ago as 1829 Goethe said to Förster: 'In no land are there so many hypocrites and sanctimonious dissemblers as in England.'

"We must wait in patience and with confidence in our leaders for the final settlement which the future will bring. The men in our navy are burning to imitate the deeds of their comrades on land. Whenever an opportunity has arisen, they have shown themselves equal to the enemy. Our navy knows, and that is a consolation for the men during inactivity, that the lofty task of breaking England's

power will fall to their share. The men know that the final purpose of this world war can only be attained with their help, they know what is before them, and that the enormous stake demands and deserves all they have to give.

" In this time of trial we can best help by waiting in patience. The fleet's turn will come ; the fleet created by our Kaiser will fulfil its mission. Everyone of us recognizes that a well-thought-out plan is behind all this ; even the enemy has premonitions of it.

" In regard to England's downfall there can, may, and must be only one opinion. It is the very highest mission of German *Kultur*. Our war, too, is a ' holy war.' For the first time England's despotic power is opposed by an enemy possessing power, intelligence and will."*

Another of the fundamental reasons for German hate must be sought in the different conceptions of life and its duties in the two nations. In its chief results this has found expression in two totally different beings. Professor Engel (Berlin) once wrote that from the cradle to the grave, the German is " on the line," or, in other words, the State directs his every action.

Probably it would be more correct to look upon the German State as a Teutonic Nirvana—with this distinction, that it is a negation of personal individuality, but at the same time a huge, collective positive. The individual German fulfils his life's

* Ibid., p. 37 *et seq.*

mission by absorption into Nirvana and by having all his activities transformed in the collective whole for the benefit of the State. The will of the State is supreme; individuals exist in, through, and for, the whole. And, above all, the State's motto has been thoroughness and efficiency in every department of its manifold life; knowledge and power its aims.

Britain's development has been along other lines; the widest possible room has been left to the individual, and the ties binding him to the whole have been loose in the extreme. German discipline is replaced by British liberty, with its advantages to the individual and corresponding disadvantages for the State. Liberty implies the right to rise by honest endeavour, but does not exclude the possibility of a wilful surrender to slothful inactivity, *e.g.*, the human flotsam and jetsam of British cities, the casual ward and similar institutions. These and other phenomena of life in our islands have aroused bitter contempt among Germans. Contempt has been succeeded by envy and hatred. Rightly or wrongly the German has argued that the people who prefer sport to knowledge, self-will to a sense of duty to the community, selfishness to sacrifice,* wire-pulling

* An article by the present writer on "Some German Schools" in the *Times* Educational Supplement, October 5th, 1915, gives some faint idea of the unprecedented sacrifices made by German schools. During the war all classes of the population have voluntarily renounced a part of their earnings for war charities. In the *Fränkischer Kurier* for October

and patronage to efficiency—this people is no longer worthy of the first place among the nations. By right of merit, morality and efficient fitness —that place belongs to Germany.

Unfortunately the present war has brought many proofs that there is no small amount of truth in this indictment, and most unfortunate of all, neutral countries too accept Germany's version that Britain is unorganized, self-interested, inefficient and effete. And to just the same degree they are convinced that Germany is thorough. They love Britain's humanitarian idea, but admire German efficiency—although they fear the latter's militarism.

Still when they are driven to choose to whom they shall confide their vital interests, *i.e.*, future existence, they prefer to lean on successful German thoroughness, than on Britain's humanitarianism unsupported by the strong arm. At the moment of writing there is wailing and gnashing of teeth throughout the British Empire at the diplomatic failure in Bulgaria and the previous fiasco in Turkey. Sir Edward Grey has dealt with the question in Parliament, but he has not mentioned the true reason.

The true reason is that this country has fallen

13th, 1915, the Burgomaster of Nuremberg announced that the voluntary reduction of salaries agreed to by the municipal officials of that city had resulted in 264,000 marks (£13,000) going to charitable funds. The author could cite dozens of similar instances, but it would interest him most of all to know whether any town in the British Isles can show a better record than Nuremberg, with a population of 350,000.

into the habit of sending diplomatic representatives abroad who have not been keen enough to obtain a mastery of the language, or a full knowledge of the feelings and national aspirations of the peoples to whom they were accredited. Instead of being living ambassadors of the British idea, they have often been concrete examples before foreign eyes of British—inefficiency. An example of the language question which came under the author's personal notice, deserves mention.

In the spring of 1914 there seemed to be a danger that a German would be appointed British Consul in Nuremberg, and in order to prevent this the author wrote to a British Minister stationed in Munich. He was greatly surprised to receive a reply—the latter, of course, was in English—addessed on the outside to:

"Dr. T. Smith,
"*On the top* of the University of Erlangen."

That is to say, the German preposition *auf* was employed instead of *an*. A mistake which even an elementary knowledge of German should have made impossible. In the British Legation at Munich there was a German-British Consul—a Munich timber-merchant. If readers imagine that Munich was an unimportant city in the diplomatic sense, then they are recommended to study the French Yellow Book, which contains final proof that an efficient French Minister was able to make important discoveries at the Bavarian Court.

British prestige, confidence in British efficiency and power among neutrals has gravitated dangerously in the direction of zero, while admiration for Germany has correspondingly risen. That there is only too much reason for the change, the course of the war has given ample proof, and therein lies the hope of Britain's future. The war will reveal to the British both their strength and weakness, and if the war does not destroy the dry rot in the land, then it is merely the precursor of Britain's final downfall.

There can be no greater mistake than closing one's eyes to the good points in a resolute enemy. As far as this war is concerned they can be summarized under two heads: (1.) The German Board of Education, which has developed and mobilized the last ounce of German brains and directed them into the service of the Fatherland.* (2.) The Ger-

* Five years ago the present author wrote in the September number, 1910, of Macmillan's *School World*:—"Educational reforms and plans must come from the schoolmen; they never spring of themselves from out of the people; and this is perhaps the most deplorable admission of all, that modern England has no great educationist or statesman capable of formulating a national system of schools which shall develop the intellectual material of the nation to its highest powers, and direct those powers into the best channels. For several decades school inspectors, etc., have visited continental countries to study their educational systems, and have returned home with innumerable fads—but no system. Everything of the fantastic has been copied, but no foundations have been laid; with the result that England's educational system to-day resembles a piece of patchwork containing a rich variety of colours and a still greater variety of stuff-quality. It were better for us to have done with educationists who preach about 'the rigid uniformity of system which is alien both to the English temperament and to the lines on which English public schools have developed.' The said

man War Office, which has mobilized Germany's physical and technical forces.

No other State possesses institutions to compare with them. They are the foundation of Germany's strength, and the present author's only regret is, that the overwhelming forces obtained by bridling the Teutonic Niagara of brains and muscle, have been directed by a false patriotism into the wrong channels. Still that is what Britain is up against, and Britain can only secure an honourable victory by surpassing them. And this much may be admitted even at this stage of the struggle: one part of the "German idea" is certain of complete victory along the whole line—German thoroughness and self-sacrifice.

Because only by adopting that ideal is it possible for Germany's enemies to beat her. Political intrigues, hunger caused by blockade, cant, wire-pulling, hiding the truth, etc., etc., will break down before the German onslaught like waves break upon a rock. Britain has got to hark back to Strafford's watchword "thorough" and season it with the spirit of Cromwell's Ironsides.

To-day Germans are seriously discussing measures by which Britain's financial supremacy—and there-

public schools have hopelessly failed to meet the necessity of a nationa system of education, or to form the nucleus from which such a system could or can develop itself. That the Falls f Niagara, however, dissipate untold natural forces is just as true as that England wastes immeasurable intellectual force because her forces are allowed to dissipate through not being disciplined and bridled by a fitting educational mechanism. Therefore let England turn to the prosaic work of organising!"

with her naval supremacy—can be overthrown, after the present war. One writer proposes a return to Napoleon's Continental system, and concludes his plea :

"The British Empire can and must be overthrown, so that the Continent of Europe may flourish and develop according to the dictates of Europe's will. According to Herbert Spencer's view, Europe must exercise the highest ethics, viz., 'give the highest possible total of human beings, life, happiness and above all harmony of work.'

"England has never comprehended what 'the harmony of work' means. Her entire heroism consisted in brutally suppressing the weaker, and avaricious exploitation of everything foreign by means of cunning treaties and business tricks. Even an Englishman, Sir J. Seeley, in his book, 'The Growth of British Policy,' has defined this characteristic with objective clearness.

"For sixty years England struggled against Holland—after which the latter lay prostrate before her. Now England's battle against her greatest and mightiest rival has commenced—against Germany. This struggle will last sixty years and longer if Great Britain does not succumb before. Every peace will only mean preparation for new battles, till the final result is attained; English history affords proof of this.

"Shall Germany, the latest rival, be broken too? Or shall it be her mission to awaken Europe

to war against greed and avarice, hypocrisy and theft, robbery and violence? Lands which have slept and dreamed for centuries, do not easily awake. And a part of Europe still dreams deeply under the hypnotic influence of English cant and altruism, or at least of her God-ordained hegemony.

"This must be the goal of German statecraft and German diplomacy. The dream must be dispelled, and the mask torn from the hypocrite's face. If Germany desires to exist, then the weak, faltering expediency-policy of the German Empire must be at an end. Our one and only aim must be: Down with England!

"Germany, however, may not strive to enter into England's heritage—that must fall to the Continent. England's heir shall be Europe, which will then be able to progress and develop as history intended."*

German hate has been fed by stories of British atrocities, ill-treatment of German civilians, the alleged use of dum-dum bullets by British soldiers, and the employment of coloured troops from India etc. A book has been published under the style of "The Black Book of Atrocities committed by our Enemies."† The charges concerning the use of dum-dum bullets by the British are dealt with on pp. 39-43.

In spite of the fact that von Treitschke advocates

* Captain H. Schubart: "England und die Interessen des Kontinents" ("England and Continental Interests"), p. 50.

† "Das Schwarzbuch der Schandtaten unserer Feinde." Berlin, 1915

the employment of all available troops, irrespective of colour, by a State at war, and in spite of the fact that Germany has herself employed native troops in this war (Cameroons, etc.), their employment by Britain has aroused a wave of bitter hatred in Germany. As a justification for this indignation the Black Book quotes Earl Chatham's speech against the employment of Red Indians in the war with the American colonies.

It is impossible to suppose that some of the charges of ill-treatment of Germans by the British are more than the squeals of the bully on feeling the pinch. Carl Peters' book "Das deutsche Elend in London" ("German Misery in London") must certainly be dismissed as belonging to the squeals. Another booklet* may perhaps be quoted, though with all reserve, because it involves the charge of endangering the white man—above all, the honour of white women—in Africa.

"In declaring my willingness to relate our experiences during the defence and surrender of Duala and my experiences in English captivity, my motive was not to add fuel to the fires of hate against England. But it would be an injustice if we were silent concerning English outrages. Thousands of our brother Germans lie in English prisoners' camps; their hands are tied and their mouths closed by the force of circumstances. But with inward wrath they endure in silence. Yet

* "In Englischer Gefangenschaft" ("In English Captivity"), by Heinrich Norden, late missionary in Duala, Cameroons.

their position demands that we, who have suffered with them and have luckily escaped, should speak for them.

"It is our bounden duty to the Fatherland to reveal the truth about English atrocities, and I am all the more conscious of that duty because some circles betray a certain amount of mistrust concerning the reports of English horrors.

"On Sunday, September 27th, after all the necessary preparations had been made, the white flag was hoisted. In a few hours the town was teeming with black and white English and French landing parties, who were received with indescribable joy by the natives. The latter followed the soldiers about like dogs, and in real dog-manner began to show their teeth (against the Germans).

"Everything remained quiet on Sunday, but on the following day robbery and plundering began in a way which we had never believed possible. Still less were we prepared for the brutal treatment which the English practised on us defenceless Germans. At first they made sure of those who had borne arms; with lies and deceit they were enticed into a trap. They were requested to give in their names, whereupon they would be set at liberty. However, when the English thought that the majority had been collected, the victims were driven on to a steamer which took them to French Dahomey.

"During the months of our imprisonment I had ample opportunity to observe how the Germans

have been ill-treated by the blacks. The English incited them like a pack of hounds to worry their own race—and looked on with a laugh. Yet the Germans bore all this degradation with proud calm, and with the consolation that a day will come when all this shame will be wiped out.

"On the way to the harbour I met about twenty Germans; our company increased from hour to hour. Women were weeping who did not know the fate of their husbands, but this had not the faintest effect on the brutal hearts of the English. At last night fell; we were tortured by hunger and burning thirst. We were in anguish as to what would become of us. Why were our enemies so inconceivably bitter?* Why did they tell us no word of truth? They declared openly that everything German was to be destroyed, German thrones overthrown and the German devils driven out.

"Albion's heroic sons were only able to capture the Cameroons with the aid of native treachery. The blacks showed them the ways, betrayed the German positions, and murdered Germans in cold blood wherever opportunity occurred. The English even paid a Judas reward of twenty to fifty shillings for every German, living or half-dead, who was brought in by the natives.

"Later I met various prisoners whose evidence

* Norden has had ample opportunities to learn the story of Belgium, but he and all other Germans writers, in apparently holy innocence, look upon all bitterness against their nation as a cruel injustice.—Author.

corroborated the inhuman tortures which they had endured. Herr Schlechtling related how he was attacked at Sanaga by natives with bush-knives, just as he was aiming at an English patrol. Herr Nickolai was captured by blacks and his clothes torn from his body and numerous knife wounds inflicted on his body. The natives took him to an English steamer whose captain paid them twenty shillings.

"Another German, Herr Student,* was compelled to look on while the natives drowned his comrade (Herr Nickstadt) in a river, while he himself was afterwards delivered up to the English. Yet another, Herr Fischer, was surprised while taking a meal, bound hand and foot, beaten and then handed over to the English."†

After all, the picture does not seem so terrible as this good missionary would make out. In any case he has failed to make out a case which will bear comparison with that already proved against the German army in Europe, or even so bad as the treatment dealt out by German civilians to their fellow-countrymen during August, 1914. Furthermore it may be safely assumed that the bitterness of the natives is to be ascribed to German tyranny, which culminated, as Norden relates on

* Four of these men are still in British captivity. Another Teuton who has sent blood-curdling tales to Germany may be found in the person of Martin Trojans, prisoner on Rottnest Island. It would be good to give these men an opportunity of making statements in London before a commission of neutral diplomatists.—Author.

† "In englischer Gefangenschaft," pp. 1–30.

p. 16 of his book, in the strangling of a number of natives, including chiefs of tribes just before the advent of the British.

Still his book has had due influence on German public opinion. A German lady in a book full of hysterical hate* has based a foul charge upon Norden's statements (besides publishing his experiences the missionary has delivered many public lectures), that the English and French left German women to the mercies of the natives!

"In the hearts of all those Germans who in this great time, are banished from the Fatherland and who do not know how things really stand, there burns a great hate, hate for England and the ardent desire to fight against her—the basest and most hated of all our enemies.

"I have come to the end of my report, which contains only a fraction of the outrages committed by Albion. And this nation talks of German atrocities! If all the lies spread by the English Press were true, even then England would have every reason to be dumb. Only he who has felt the effects of English hate upon his own person can understand the brutal deeds perpetrated recently on Germans in London and Liverpool. There, England's moral depth is revealed only too clearly, and before the world she seeks to drag us down to the same level."†

* Louise Niessen-Deiters: "Kriegsbriefe einer Frau" ("The War Letters of a Woman"), p. 56.

† Norden's book, p. 43 *et seq.*

Considering that the total number of Germans captured in the Cameroons is only equal to the number of civilians murdered or wounded in British towns by Zeppelin bombs, at a cost of hundreds of thousands of pounds to the German Government, one begins to wonder whether Norden and his countrymen possess any sense of proportion. Germans are assiduous students of Shakespeare, but have seemingly overlooked the comedy: *Much ado about Nothing.*

Ireland is another text for long and windy sermons of German hate, but the conclusion of one of these tirades* will suffice to show Germany's real motive.

"At present the direction of the Irish revolutionary movement is in the hands of Professor Evin MacNeill, Mac O'Rahilly and, above all, Sir Roger Casement. The final acceptance of the 'Constitution of Irish Volunteers' was carried on Sunday, October 25th, 1914, in Dublin. At that congress of Irish volunteers—who to-day number more than 300,000 well-armed men—special stress was laid on the fact that the volunteers are Irish soldiers and not imperialistic hirelings.

"Further the members of the organization have engaged not to submit under any circumstances to the Militia Ballot Act, a kind of national service law which, remarkable to say, is only enforced in Ireland.

* Dr. Hans Rost: "Deutschland's Sieg, Irland's Hoffnung"("Germany's Victory, Ireland's Hope"), p. 25 *et seq.*

"The Irishmen are thronging to join the movement, and pamphlets are being distributed, and appeals made on all sides. Besides which, weapons are being gathered and money collected. The entire episcopacy of Ireland has warned the young men against enlisting in English regiments on the ground that they will be placed in regiments to which no Catholic priest is attached. The warning has been most successful in hindering recruiting. In order to break the opposition of the bishops, England has appointed a special representative to the Vatican.

"When the German Emperor took steps to appoint Catholic priests in the prisoners' camps where Irish soldiers are interned, the English at once appointed forty-five Catholic priests with officer's rank, to the British army in France. Even this measure, as well as the sudden diplomatic activity at the Vatican, is little calculated to extinguish the hate for England in the Irish mind.

"On November 24th (1914) James Larkin began a propaganda in America. He appealed to all Irishmen to send gold, weapons, and ammunition to Ireland, for the day of reckoning with England. 'We will fight,' said Larkin, 'for the destruction of the British Empire and the foundation of an Irish republic; we will fight to deliver Ireland from that foul heap of ruins called England.' The assembly broke into enthusiastic applause.

"At that moment the curtain was raised, and on the stage a company of Irish volunteers and a

number of German uhlans were revealed. The officers commanding the companies crossed swords and shook hands while the assembly sang the 'Wacht am Rhein' and 'God save Ireland.'

"Sir Roger Casement has long been a thorn in the side of the English Government, therefore the latter has not shrunk from making a murderous conspiracy against the life of this distinguished Irish leader. In agreement with Sir Edward Grey, the British Minister in Christiania, Mr. Findlay, tried to bribe Casement's companion—named Christensen—to murder Sir Roger. The attempted murder did not succeed, but the original documents are in the possession of the German Foreign Office, so that all doubt is excluded as to the English Government's participation—with their most honourable Grey at the head—in this Machiavellian plan."

This colossal Germanism concerning a plan to murder Sir Roger Casement has been assiduously spread throughout the German Press. The Berlin Government allows the German people to believe that incriminating documents are in their possession, and the vilest statements to blacken Mr. Findlay's character were printed in German newspapers when that gentleman was appointed to the Bulgarian Court in Sofia.

There are so few utterances in German war literature, which display reason or even moderation, that the author feels glad to be in a position to cite two. In the May number of the

Süddeutsche-Monatshefte, Professor Wilhelm Franz (Tübingen) reviewed one of the hate-books, viz., a work entitled " Pedlars and Heroes " by a German named Sombart. A few passages will suffice to show that Germany is not quite devoid of straightforward men, who dare to castigate hate.

" Towards the end of his book, Sombart solemnly assures the English that ' they need not fear us as a colonizing power ; we (the Germans) have not the least ambition to conquer half-civilized and barbarian peoples in order to fill them with German spirit (*Geist*). But the English can colonize and fill such peoples with their spirit—for they have none, or at least only a pedlar's.'

" It would never occur to any sane man to refute effusions of this kind, for they cannot be taken seriously.. Still I cannot but wish that an angry English journalist with his clever and fiery pen, would fall upon Sombart's book and give its author a sample of English spirit. The work teems with unjust, incorrect opinions ; is full of crass ignorance and grotesque exaggerations, which lead the unlearned astray, injure Germany's cause, and annoy those who know better—so far as they do not excite ridicule.

" What is one to think when Sombart asks his readers : ' What single cultural work has emerged from the great shop, England, since Shakespeare —except that political abortion the English State ? '

"If I had to answer Sombart I should say, the great shop has given the English State practically everything which makes for internal peace, solidarity and national health. It has enabled the nation to exercise tolerance within, and develop splendour and power without, which in their turn have made Britannia the mistress of the world's waterways, and the British the first colonial nation in the world.

"England's cultural development has brought all these since Shakespeare's time; energy, will-power, united with high endeavour to realize great aims and overcome mighty resistance. And the basis of this splendid progress which compels the admiration of all other States, was what Sombart presumes to call an 'abortion.'"

The other is taken from "Der englische Gedanke in Deutschland" ("The English Idea in Germany,") by Ernst Müller-Holm, p. 72. "It is not true that all Englishmen are scoundrels. It is not true that there is nothing but pedlar's spirit in England, and because it is not true it should not be said, not even in these times when war passions run high.

"The fatherland of Shakespeare, Byron and Thackeray; the home of Newton, Adam Smith, Darwin and Lyell will ever remain a land of honour to educated Germans. Where would it end if I were to count up the heroes of English intellect whose names are written in letters of gold in humanity's great book?"

It is well to conclude this chapter of hate with two quotations which breathe respect. The author does not believe that German hate will be so long-enduring as the hate-mongers would have us think. Rather, he is convinced that mutual interest will force the two nations together within one or two decades. Preparatory for that day, it is Britain's duty to compel Germany's respect.

There are good, even magnificent forces in the German nation; there are still noble-minded, high-thinking Germans who yearn to work in the great civilizing world enterprises. But—and therein lies the tragedy—"the good, the true, the pure, the just" are not to-day the predominating powers. They must work out their own salvation; but if the time ever comes when the finest and best German thought directs Germany's destinies, then there will be no lack of sympathizers in this country, who will hail the day as the advent of a new world era. For the present, all mutual jealousies, all the burning ambitions, all quarrels and hate, are submitted to the arbitrament of the sword. If Britain only wields her sword so well and honourably, as to gain unstinted victory, that will prove to be the firmest basis for future respect and enduring peace.

CHAPTER XIII

"MAN TO MAN AND STEEL TO STEEL"

Scott.

MENTION has already been made of German disrespect, even contempt for England and the English. One of the reasons for this contempt was the smallness of the British army, and the fact that our soldiers are paid servants of the country. Germans apparently never could comprehend why a man should receive payment for serving his country by bearing arms, and that fact appeared to them to afford overwhelming evidence of the pedlar-soul (*Krämergeist*). The second conclusion drawn, has generally been that the Britisher is devoid of all sense of duty and self-sacrificing patriotism. Probably the flocking of several million men to arms in defence of the Empire, and in defence of British conceptions of right and wrong has done something to convince Germans that the premises of the syllogism, were not so self-evident as they had imagined.

"Among all the great European Powers, England is the only one which has not introduced national service and remained true to the

principle of keeping an army of paid soldiers. Hence, when in all other lands at the outbreak of war, the entire people stands ready to defend the national honour, England is compelled to beat the recruiting drums before she can wage war." *

"England wages war on business lines. It is not the sons of the land who bleed for Britannia's honour; mercenaries from the four corners of the world—including blacks—carry on the war as a trade for England's business world and nobility. England might well smirk as she uttered blessings on the Triple Entente, for has she not borne the brand of perfidy for centuries? Her breast conceals the meanest pedlar's spirit in the world.

"Every battle which Russia loses is a victory for England, and every defeat which France suffers means profit for England. She can afford to wait till her allies are beaten and then take over their business. 'First come, first served' does not hold good in England's case; for her motto is, the last to come gets the prize.

"Twelve Powers declared war on Germany. Then Japan, the thirteenth, poked out her yellow face and demanded Kiau Chou. A hyena had smelt corpses, but the blackmailing Mongol received no reply to his ultimatum. Grim laughter

* Dr. H. Hirschberg: "Wie John Bull seine Söldner wirbt" ("How John Bull recruits his Mercenaries"), p. 3. Hirschberg reproduces in facsimile a large number of the recruiting placards which have decorated the British Isles since the outbreak of war. "Your King and Country need you" is also given (English and German) with music.

was heard in Germany—booming, bitter laughter at the band of thieves who hoped to plunder us. And in the wantonness of their righteous wrath, German soldiers scribbled on the barrack walls an immortal sentence: 'Declarations of war thankfully received!' "*

" How wickedly the war was forced upon Germany! A ring of enemies surrounded her. Envy and ill-will were their motives, but they lacked the right measure for Germany's greatness. Our people stand invincible, united, staking life and everything they have—till the last enemy lies in the dust.

" Not much longer and the goal will be attained; the many-sided attack has been smashed and the war carried into enemy lands. Shining glory has been won by Germany's armies. The passionate *élan* of our soldiers, their death-despising bravery and one-minded strength, have gained victory after victory.

" Revenge begins to glow against the originator of the world-conflagration—against false England! Mute and astonished the world saw her baseness —wondering at her greatness and her sin. Envy and ill-will inspired her to cast the lives of millions into the scales, to open the flood-gates of blood, to spread pain and unspeakable misery—herself coldly smiling.

" What are men's lives to England? She pays

* A. Fendrich: " Gegen Frankreich und Albion " (" Against France and Albion "). Stuttgart, 1915; pp. 11–12.

for them. Her army of mercenaries which was to force her yoke on Europe, is paid with the gold of blackmailers. She sends hirelings into the field to defend the inheritance of her ancestors; paid mercenaries fight for her most sacred possessions, while those who pay the blood-money throng to see the masterly exponents of football. And England is proud of her splendid sons who prefer this intellectual game to stern battle with the enemy.

"How different it is with our men! With shouts of joy they march forth to meet the foe, offering their lives in a spirit of glad sacrifice for the highest and best which the world has to offer humanity. Storming forwards with the song, 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles,' our youthful hosts, greeting death with a smile, hurl themselves upon the enemy. Truly, wherever and so long as men are men, the glory of our warriors will find remembrance in brave hearts."*

"It would be neither right nor just to accuse English soldiers of a want of courage. They have fought everywhere, by land and sea, with respect-inspiring gallantry—for mercenaries! But the warlike virtues of England's armies cannot atone for the cowardice with which she has conducted the struggle for naval supremacy. Albion means England's rulers. And this England of Messrs. Grey and Churchill, has covered herself with

* J. Bermbach: "Zittere, England!" ("England, tremble!"). Weimar, 1915; p. 5 *et seq.*

shame for all time by the manner of her warfare on sea.

"Albion has not changed. She has hidden her battleships in the bays of northern Ireland, and conducts war on sea—not against our ships and soldiers, but against those at home, German women and children! 'The pinch of hunger makes the heart weak,' said the noble-minded Churchill."*

"According to its composition the English army is an army of mercenaries. On that account, however, it would be a great mistake to despise the quality of the soldiers or to cherish contempt for them. The standard of physical fitness demanded of the recruits was—at least up till a short time ago—more severe than that imposed in other lands. There is no doubt, our German brothers who have met the English on the field of battle, admit that they fight not only with valour but with unyielding stubbornness.

"This results not so much from barrack-yard drill and field manœuvres, as from the practical experience of warfare gained in many campaigns. England is occupied almost uninterruptedly, in warlike enterprises in some part of the world or other. Further, the officers—belonging mostly to the upper circles—have distinguished themselves in the field by a rash bravery which was marked perhaps, not so much by military as sportsmanlike behaviour.

"All in all the strategic value of the English

* Fendrich: "Gegen Frankreich und Albion," p. 152 *et seq.*

army in regard to leadership, training, discipline and the spirit of the troops, cannot compare with the conscript armies of other lands—especially the German army. Yet the contempt which has been expressed for it in the Press as an army of hirelings, is just as little merited to-day as it was in the past when it added many a glorious page to England's history.

"These remarks are intended as a refutation to the reproaches made against the English army. It is true, those unjust criticisms did not originate with experts, or they would imply a dangerous under-estimation of the enemy. But in consequence of the widespread acceptance among the masses they unjustly feed the fires of hate."*

* * * * * *

"For the last ten days we have been resting to the west of Lille not far from Armentières; an English army is opposed to us. My battery is one of the links in the long chain of growlers† which daily pour fire and iron on to the enemy. We gave up counting the days and fights, for every day has its battle. Besides the English there are Indian troops, and a few French batteries in front of us.

"Every day confirms our experience that we are faced by an enemy with incomparable powers of resistance and endurance. An enemy who can

* Dr. G. Landauer: "England." Vienna; 1915, pp. 74–5.

† The Germans call their big guns "Brummer," *i.e.*, growler.—Author.

hardly be shaken by the sharpest rifle-fire or the most awful rain of shell and shrapnel. We gain ground slowly, exceedingly slowly, and every step of soil has to be paid for dearly.

"In the trenches taken by storm the English dead lie in rows, just like men who had not winced or yielded before the bayonets of the stormers. From the military point of view it must be admitted that such an enemy deserves the greatest respect. The English have adapted the experiences gained in their colonial wars to European conditions in a particularly clever manner.

"Every attempt to cross the canal was thwarted by artillery fire and in many places the enemy was more advantageously situated than our men. His trenches were at least dry while ours were flooded with water. I went into the front trenches by Dixmude and found them lined half a yard deep with faggots and wood, yet at every step our feet sank into the water and slush.

"On the other bank of the Yser lay the enemy and fired continuously. Anyone who saw our soldiers under these conditions and heard their jokes will never forget the sight. All the folk at home who grumbled at the slow progress ought to have been sent for a single day and night into that mud-swamp!

"In those fields and canals, in this endless morass —made impassable by flooding—many, many brave German soldiers have sacrificed their lives. During the autumn and winter months of 1914 the whole

Yser domain was transformed into a vast graveyard.

"The battle-front was determined by the nature of the land. It stretched from the sea through Ramscapelle, Dixmude, Roulers, Paschendaal to Ypres and the rage of battle swayed like a tossing ship in ocean storm. Even now Germany does not know the greatness and terror of the battles fought there. Only names are known, such as Middelkerke, Zonnebeeke, Warneton, etc.

"The Belgians fought with the courage of despair. Their battle-cry was 'Louvain!' and 'Termonde!' Highlanders, Indians, Sikhs, Ghurkas, Zouaves, Turkos, Canadians, Belgians, French and English were thrown into the line, and ever-new regiments landed at Calais. Houses and villages were taken and re-taken at the point of the bayonet, as many as seven times. Towns and bridges were conquered and lost often eight times in succession, accompanied by heavy artillery duels and incredible losses." *

* * * * * *

"We† have just gone into billets. Not far off are the positions of *the* enemy—the English. There will be a battle to-morrow and everybody is serious. Mostly by the evening, we are too tired to think, but it is not so to-day.

* Heinrich Binder: "Mit dem Hauptquartier nach Westen," p. 123 *et seq.*

† Extracts from the diary of a German soldier, published in "Der Weltkrieg" ("The World War"). Leipzig, 1915; p. 632 *et seq.*

"Again and again I arrive at the same conclusion —war is too great a thing to comprehend. Now we are going into battle with the black-white-gold band on our breasts. Greetings to you all at home, above all to you, father. I have your blessing, haven't I?

"October 24th.—We are lying before the road from Ypres to Paschendaal. The Lt.-Colonel has just told us that 'the losses cannot go on at this rate.' By the side of the brook, on this side the road, English sharpshooters are in hiding. They shoot damned straight. Our artillery is not yet up; the reason for our heavy losses yesterday.

"The infantry advance with a rush towards the windmill, but we no sooner top the hill than the English machine guns begin to rattle. Our front ranks are mown down. Every attempt to advance fails. The order was given to lie down and there we remained for four hours. Then we rush one after the other through a hedge. When darkness fell we had nearly reached the English trenches, but were recalled and spent the night in our trench.

"The next morning passed quietly, except for rifle-fire. Captain von K. was hit, and rolled over in front of the trench. Three comrades crept out one after the other to fetch him—all three fell. At last our wounded captain was still too—killed by a second bullet. Being compelled to watch this scene without power to help, was the beginning of our day.

"Just after mid-day the music began. Crash!

a shell lands in our trench on the right. A short pause, and crash follows crash as the shells are dropped into our trench at distances of four yards. Death walks slowly up the trench towards us. We know that he is coming, we see him. Everybody is lying flat on the ground. We are waiting for 'our' shell.

"If we had a communication trench we could escape—but there isn't one. We reckon the distance: twenty-five yards away another direct hit. Crash! only twenty yards. Fifteen yards! We have only five minutes to live. Thoughts of God and home and parents rush through the mind; yet they are only numb feelings. Crash! ten yards; one more and then comes 'ours.' But no, the next boom was in the trench behind, and in the same manner that trench was cleared from end to end.

"'Lieutenant T. killed, Lieutenant K. takes command' was passed along. We have hardly left the trench when bullets begin to whistle round our heads. Man after man remains behind. At last night sinks and hides the horrors of the day. I have lost my company and spend the night in the open with a few others.

"The next morning the sun shone brightly; the morning wind blows coldly over the furrows and over the dead. I have no words to describe what I saw—but my heart bled! Near Paschendaal I found my company. Altogether there are thirty of us—out of two hundred and fifty."

* * * * * *

German war literature affords a complete picture of the transformation of German contempt for the British army into profound respect. As witness the following :

"It cannot be denied that the English have supported Joffre's offensive with valour, strength and vigour. The battles which have raged since the end of September on the front between Givenchy la Gobelle and Armentières, have confirmed the deadly seriousness of the English. And if they have not obtained great successes, still, in this gigantic grapple, they have displayed desperate courage which compels the admiration of their opponents.

"The Commander of a division, with whom I spent the last few days, said to me in a tone of deep conviction : 'Nobody must talk lightly of English soldiers in my presence. Their bravery and the extraordinary courage of English officers compels my admiration. Regimental commanders and staff officers advanced in the first line of their troops. They fight and fall by the side of their men. I saw several high officers killed myself.' Besides, I have heard his Excellency's words confirmed by many of his officers."*

In a previous work the author has expressed the opinion that Great Britain must employ all her

* Julius Hirsch, War Correspondent with the German Army, in the *Fränkischer Kurier*, October 22nd, 1915.

strength in this, the greatest of all wars, and in concluding this work he repeats that warning still more emphatically. Only a true realization of the inevitable fact that British democracy is on trial by battle—"man to man and steel to steel"—will give the necessary courage, endurance, faith and hope to bring the issue to a victorious end.

THE END

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